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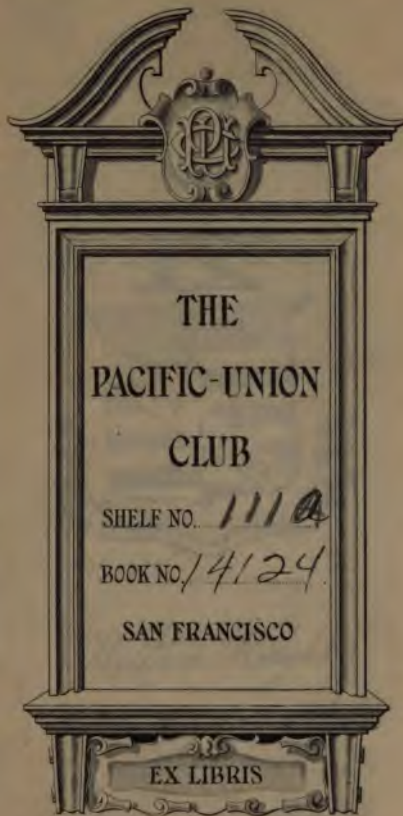
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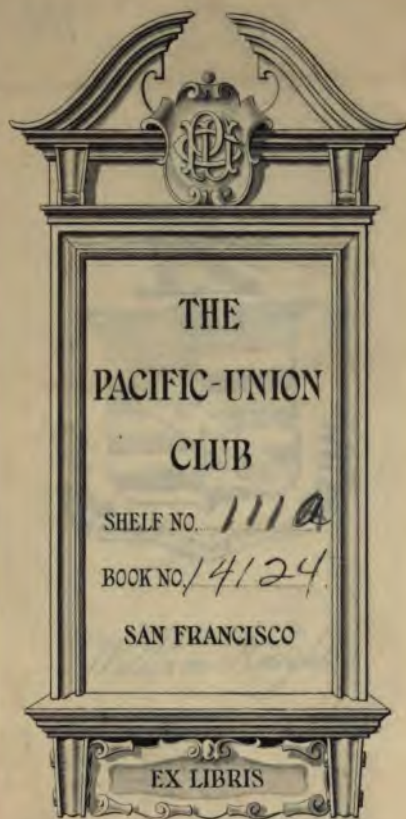
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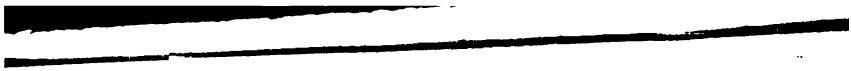
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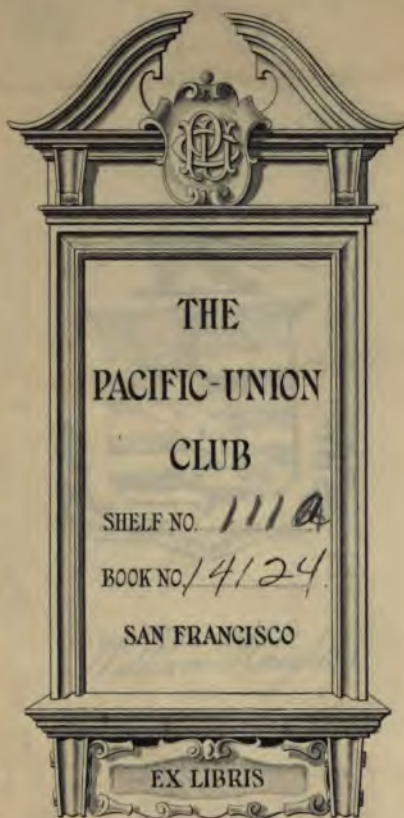
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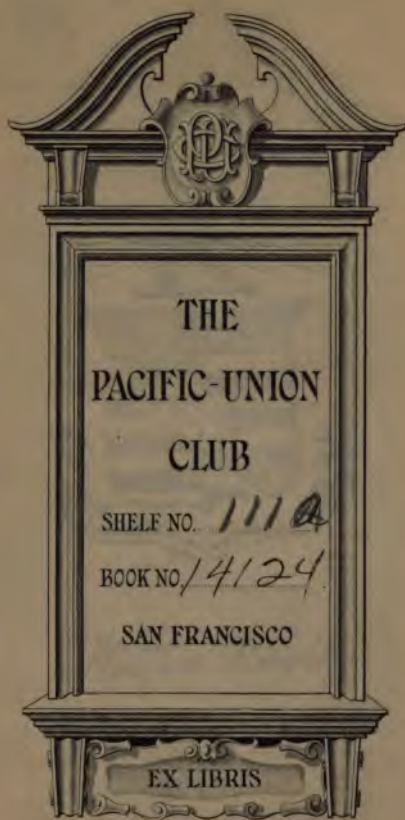
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THE LAST INCA.

THE LAST INCA;

OR, THE

STORY OF TUPAC AMÂRU.

"The fate of the whole race might be compared to that of some beautiful and graceful maidens, who, on some fatal festal day, had playfully ranged themselves in exquisite order, to support on their heads, as living caryatides, a slight weight of fruit and flowers, which had all of a sudden hardened into marble, and crushed them under it."

SIR ARTHUR HELPS.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
TINSLEY BROTHERS, CATHERINE STREET, STRAND.

1874.

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LONDON;
SWEETING AND CO, PRINTERS,
80. GRAY'S INN ROAD.

TO
HIS BROTHER
ALEC,
THE WRITER DEDICATES THIS STORY
OF A LOST KINGDOM.

1. The first step in the process of creating a new product is to identify a market need. This involves conducting market research to determine what consumers want and what problems they are trying to solve.

2. Once a market need has been identified, the next step is to develop a concept for a product that addresses that need. This involves brainstorming ideas and selecting the most promising one.

3. The third step is to create a prototype of the product. This allows the designer to test the product's functionality and make any necessary adjustments before moving forward with production.

4. After the prototype has been tested and refined, the next step is to create a detailed design for the product. This includes specifying the materials, components, and manufacturing process.

5. The final step in the process is to manufacture the product. This involves working with a manufacturer to produce the product in large quantities and distribute it to the market.

6. Once the product is in the market, it is important to monitor its performance and gather feedback from customers. This information can be used to make improvements and develop new products in the future.

7. The process of creating a new product is a continuous one, as new market needs and technologies emerge over time. It is important to stay up-to-date on industry trends and be prepared to adapt to change.

8. Finally, it is important to remember that creating a new product is a team effort. It requires collaboration between designers, engineers, marketers, and manufacturers to bring a new product to life.

9. The process of creating a new product is a complex one, but it is also a rewarding one. It allows designers to bring their ideas to life and make a positive impact on the world.

10. In conclusion, the process of creating a new product involves identifying a market need, developing a concept, creating a prototype, creating a detailed design, manufacturing the product, and monitoring its performance. It is a continuous process that requires collaboration and adaptation to change.

11. The process of creating a new product is a journey, and it is one that is filled with challenges and opportunities. It is a journey that requires patience, persistence, and a willingness to learn from failure.

12. In the end, the most important thing is to create a product that meets a real need and makes a difference in the world. That is the true goal of the product creation process.

THE LAST INCA;

OR, THE

STORY OF TUPAC AMÂRU.



CHAPTER THE FIRST.

"Alas, poor country!

Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
Be called our mother, but our grave: where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;
Where sighs, and groans, and shrieks that rend the air,
Are made, not mark'd; where silent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy: the dead man's knell
Is there scarce ask'd, for who; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken."—*Macbeth*, act iv., sc. 3.

DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF TELLING THE STORY —
THE CITY OF LIMA—A NOBLE MARCHIONESS—HER
HUSBAND—HIS SECRET MISSION, AND HIS VIOLENT
DEATH—A GARDEN FOR A GRAVE—WITH A FEW
SOBER FACTS CONCERNING TREES WHICH SEEM
LIKE FICTION.



IF we journey in the land of the
Pyramids we need no guide or
dragoman, for the Pyramids are
their own best storytellers. We travel

through all the land of Egypt and are at home, although we speak neither Italian nor the language of the Copt. Every town and city, village and ruin, has its story written on its face more plainly than it has ever been printed in type. But we had heard its outlines before—maybe, in childhood—and we stand before those hoary monuments like one who stands beside his friend who is in the act of recovering his life from the grasp of death.

If we journey in the land of the Incas, with its mountains reaching to a far higher sky than ever spanned the land of the Pharaohs; where nature is so stupendous that man has not dared to call her by any familiar names; where the hills have no mist, no known history, and no character, except that of size to distinguish them from each other; where the rivers are as desolate as deserts, and the desert is part of

the highway—there a guide becomes a friend, and the more talkative he is the better is he liked, especially if his talk carries the mind back to the time when the interminable, sun-baked, lifeless plain was peopled with human beings, and the great and haggard mountains were beautiful with trees and cascades.

This story is so far like the country in which it is laid, that everything requires to be explained before it can evoke sympathy. Nearly all its names are strange and uncouth to the eye and to the ear, and it has no associations which awaken our childish recollection, nor yet anything in common with the experience of riper age. The space of ground which it covers is overwhelming, and the distance of one city from another seems to forbid all hope of bringing the story into perspective, or of sustaining any enthusiasm which might be

created against what may be termed a tiresome, sunless rain of commonplace details.

But notwithstanding all these drawbacks, a story can be told of that land and its people such as shall delight and astonish the young, entertain the old, and even supply some rare lessons and examples of human conduct to those who are superior to the weakness of being amused.

He who writes it—having travelled from one end of the country to the other, and from the sea coast up to the mountain sources of its grandest rivers, across its storm-swept plains and its heat-oppressed deserts, as well as wandered through its groves and forests—will make it his endeavour to confine the story in a modest frame, and to pass much time under family roofs, where, by help of the life common to those

“ Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Are pregnant with good pity—”

we may come to know something of that strange, because unknown, life of one of the most remarkable families of our kind.

The city of Lima, the capital of Peru, was not, a century and a half ago, the crowded, motley town which it is at present, with its Manchester muslins, and its Halifax baize, its Paris imitations of everything, from a man to a precious stone, and where a priest is forbidden an entrance to every respectable house with as much rigour as a thief, and for the same reason.

Lima, in the year 1780, was, albeit faded by two centuries of very fast life, the capital of a kingdom larger than any European kingdom, although it was governed only by a Viceroy and memorandum paper. It was a bright, cheerful city, occasionally clouded by church incense, as we shall see; but in spite of some

peculiar vices, and a human sacrifice now and then—officially called acts of faith—the city of Lima contained much that was beautiful, and one of its beauties was the Marchioness de Zandunga. She was a Spaniard, but had adopted Peru as her country; and she made Lima her permanent home. How this came to pass must be told with as much brevity as befits the clear understanding of this original story.

The Marchioness was one of those women whose hearts are so great that no human interest, be it ever so small, was neglected; and be it never so grand or high, but she could share it, and sympathize with it; and while she remains the same in her fellowship with the lowliest or the mightiest of the land, the one is made happy by her love, and the other is charmed by her beauty. For her beauty was part of her mind, just as the grace and

sweetness of her mind seemed to be part of her body. All that she said or did was clothed with a good nature which allured both man and beast, and even frivolous men and light women neither felt nor expressed envy or scorn when they saw her walk to church or relieve a beggar.

It is no wonder, therefore, that the quinta or villa of the Marchioness—called the Quinta del Carmen—was the favourite resort of the best men in Lima: men, for the most part, of gentle enthusiasm, whose delight was in those peaceful industries which unite the wandering children of the earth into families and kingdoms—the sweet arts by which the great mother is made to yield her riches and perpetuate them.

And no country under heaven supplied so wide a field for the cultivation of those pastoral arts as Peru. Its traditions car-

ried the memory back to the time when one of its heroes began his labours of consecrating man to Heaven by teaching him how to cultivate the earth. All through the legends of Peru there ran a gold thread of story setting forth miracles wrought by the transforming sun of perpetual plenty, divine abundance, order, beauty, and quiet. Its chiefest monuments were vast fruitful fields and teeming valleys, gardens in the midst of seas of barren sand, and mountains cultivated to their summits, bound round with silver streams of living waters.

Its ruins were also gardens of once unequalled loveliness, but now trampled into mud by the prancings of war horses; and the men and women and children, whose work those gardens were, became changed into slaves and malignant beings.

Another ruin which marred the face of that fair land, more eloquently sad than

fallen column, or capital wrought with precious skill overgrown with foul and rank life, was the number of meek-eyed, stately, domestic animals wandering about without shepherd, being without fold or even pasture, where once was plenty, and lying down to die for lack of an old familiar love.

In the very centre of the City of Kings, as Lima was then called, stood this Quinta del Carmen—a cottage, hemmed in with orange and plantain trees, where these legends and traditions were treasured up, and from whence there sprang a hope in the breasts of men that the ruins might be restored, and the fallen kingdom, rescued from its desolation, be once more made a kingdom fit for honest men to live in.

The Marquis de Zandunga, who built that quinta, had come to Peru as the representative of the Great Council of the Indies, in

Madrid, and his commission was to visit the outlying posts of the viceroyalty, the large estates, the *Repartimientos* and *Encomiendas*, to inquire into the manner in which the laws for the protection of the Indians were carried out, and to report on the actual condition in which he should find the Indians themselves. It was a secret commission. Great and loud-crying evils, arising out of the most shameful infraction of those laws, had reached the Spanish Court, and it had become absolutely necessary to make inquiries. For it had become evident to a few thoughtful men in Spain that the Spanish colonies, with Peru, the chiefest of them all, were fast going to where neither art nor nature ever designed they should go. Who was to blame for so dreadful a scandal it would be worth knowing; and, if the scandal could be removed, the cause of it cured, and those ancient

kingdoms and viceroyalties—such as the New Spains, the New Castilles, the New Toledos, and the New Granadas—be once more induced to renew their annual liberal contributions of dollars and doubloons in favour of the high and mighty monarch who had his throne in Madrid, it would be a fit and worthy work to do; and so the best man of the Great Council was besought to go and get that work done, and done quickly, in God's name.

For in sober verity the mines no longer yielded their silver, the native culture of common things had ceased almost altogether, the demand of the natives for silks and satins and other home products had likewise almost ceased; whilst the demand for spectacles, silk stockings, fans, tortoiseshell combs, gold brocade, glass beads, scandalous books, playing cards, and what not, had ceased absolutely. All these com-

modities and incommunities had become stale drugs in a market which once required the aid of all Europe to supply.

What reason could be given for a thing so strange and inconvenient as that a market once so flourishing had hopelessly ceased, as if by magic?

The only answer to the question was that the people, who had been compelled to buy those trumpery things with their hearts' blood, had at last died off, and could not on that very account any longer go to market; those who had not died were living secluded lives on berries—an answer, however, which was never transmitted to Spain; but in its stead a string of lies, long and weary, and marked with much stupidity, concerning the continued obstinacy of the native races, and the necessity of greater plenary powers to be vested in the civil officers of the Crown,

together with more stringent laws for curbing rebellious Indians. Such answer was intelligible enough to all who did not know the country or the Indians, and who were deeply interested in the prosperity of the home trade, and the consumption of French kickshaws.

So the plenary powers of the magistrates were granted, and the laws of the native races were made more stringent; but for all that, the markets did not revive, and the native population continued obstinately to decrease. It was then that the Marquis de Zandunga came to Peru, on his secret mission of inquiry. Having visited many a noted place, and travelled the tedious roads which lead to Potosi and Huancavelica, Quito, and other once-famous centres of opulence and power, he discovered the cause of the dreadful scandal; and the fact, palpable and glaring,

stared him in the face, that nearly the whole country was—not going to ruin, but that it had already gone, beyond all Spanish redemption.

All the highways had long ceased to exist. Roads there were none, nor even any bridges. In every village on one long route there were huts and houses still intact, and gardens, and poultry, and alpacas; but the poultry had run wild, and the alpacas seemed to have been struck with such despair that they turned their faces to the sun and remained motionless. There were large cloth factories, but all the looms were silent; there were mines still rich in precious metals, but not a single mine in work; there were great crops of maize, but not a soul to make harvest.

More than two years did it take the Marquis de Zandunga to complete his

official inquiries; but having made them, he was murdered while only within two miles of his own house—which he could have reached in one little quarter of an hour. Murdered, of course, by hostile Indians, according to official despatch. He was murdered by his own countrymen, the deeds of whose villainy it was, and nothing else, that brought death in all its hideous forms into that country, and covered it as with a mantle of darkest crime; and, to close the Marquis's lips—having come to know that he had been spying out the truth about them and their ways—they stabbed him just as he was within sight of his home.

His Marchioness remained in Peru, in preference to returning to her own native Andalusia, in order that she might make a garden around her husband's grave. And that grave was not to be a narrow opening

in a city churchyard but a new kingdom—overrun at present by robbers; but those robbers should be swept away, and that kingdom should be made worthy of the best king's rule. This had been the dream of the noble Marquis, and his wife shared it with her husband; and now that he had gone, she would remain and watch over the purging of that kingdom. The garden which she planted, she saw stretch miles away, carrying its beauty and its perfume to the hopeless, helpless folk, whom her countrymen had debased to a level lower than that of wild beasts.

It was the Marchioness who introduced wheat into Peru, as Pizarro did the orange. She planted the vine, and cultivated the olive; and, as the Marchioness de Chinchon first carried the precious healing febrifuge—quinine—to Europe, so our Marchioness made known there, and caused

to be propagated in the gardens of the Alcazar, as well as in Cordova, and Granada, and wherever the best climate for them was to be found, many a rare flower and soothing herb, and beauteous fruit, which Peru could give in exchange for the corn, and wine, and oil which it had received from the old country.

If there had been a few more such gardeners as this one noble woman, that part of the vineyard of the world had been now a fruitful field, instead of being the vilest slaughter ground which man's lust ever caused to be spotted with man's blood.

The Marchioness had many helpers—many of whom worked for love—planting, rearing, and propagating roses and cabbages, gooseberries and cherries, lettuces and artichokes, grapes and apples, nuts and almonds, and figs. Gardening became one of the pastimes of the young girls of the

principal families in Lima, and of some men also. The gardens of Lima became celebrated for their beauty over the whole continent ; and many a pretty legend owed its origin to the flowers planted in them. For, as the flowers multiplied around the abodes of man, so also did the humming birds; and children were taught to believe that those exquisite winged creatures were the souls of flowers, which would never fade or die; and that where the humming birds did not go for honey there dwelt evil and malignant powers, hostile to all good, and enemies of mankind. And that child's prattle had more than once caused awkward pauses in the talk of men. For example, the Archbishop's palace was surrounded by numerous beds of flowers, but there were no humming birds; the palace gardens of the Viceroy glowed with flowers, but the little winged immortals were never seen there.

The greatest helper of the Marchioness in her gardening was a Spaniard—who, for various reasons, was called the Polizon. He not only carried her seeds, and shoots, and roots to the distant part of the viceroyalty, and taught to willing minds the habits and needs of the new creatures; but he also brought back from the warm valleys of the Cordilleras, and regions far beyond, famous flowers, or birds, or fruits, which did almost as much to make those regions known as if the fruits, and birds, and flowers had been so many gold nuggets. Those who gazed on the matchless glories of the azure orchids which the Polizon transported from the sunny valley of the Vilcumayo, together with its gold silk and silver cotton, thought that perhaps might be found there another life, warmed with a different sun, and a better, than the hollow, faded, hopeless life which had now become common in Lima.

Many wondrous tales were told in the Marchioness's drawing-room, setting forth the power and riches of a land that had, in all truth and verity, become a mighty sepulchre—only no one as yet knew it; but, on the contrary, it was generally believed to be quite otherwise.

Stories came in, from day to day, of trees that yielded milk; and of other trees, in broken, arid lands, which supplied the purest water. There were bread trees; trees whose fruit were eggs and butter, the butter being packed away in easily-opened jars—so cunningly fashioned that the fiercest sun could not penetrate their sides. Other trees yielded cups and vases, some candles, others soap, others strongest and finest thread, bark that was good for hats and soles of shoes, and also for bedding. But the trees whose leaves were food and medicine, and by means of whose very skin

the deadliest fever could be charmed away, capped all those other stories of the trees, and made it wicked to doubt them.

Yes, it was quite true that with the leaf of this tree you hunger no more nor thirst any more; and with the leaves of that tree you pass through jungles infested with poisonous snakes and fear no evil.

“There is not in the world a man that fytlie can declare
The perfect sweetness and delight that filled all places
there;
For whilst in that faire Eden a man lived, he ne’er
Felt hunger, or the parchinge thirst, or vexing care.”

Here, then, was the very matter and essence of romance. No wonder that the gardening of the Marchioness grew into a passion, and that her society had a fascination for all who were young enough to hope and had will enough to labour, as also for those who, though old, could find fresh life in the pursuit of its manifold newly discovered forms.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

"Yea, this man's brow, like to a title-leaf,
Foretells the nature of a tragic volume:
So looks the strand whereon the imperious flood
Hath left a witness'd usurpation."

Second Part of King Henry IV., act i., sc. i.

THE HERO OF THIS STORY VISITS LIMA FOR THE FIRST
TIME—HOW THE MARQUIS HAD HIS EYES OPENED,
WITH OTHER THINGS WORTHY OF BEING KNOWN.



HE *sala*, or drawing-room, of the
Marchioness was then a fa-
vourite resort, and her *tertulias*,
or evening parties, became noted in the
capital. Among a distinguished company
of travellers and soldiers, judges and
churchmen, which assembled there one
summer evening, was one whose silence,
as he sat among the throng of talkers,
commanding presence, swarthy skin, and
wrapt eye, provoked many a question

—as, who could he be? or where was he from? or what *negocio*, or business, had brought him to Lima?

It was not the colour of the man's skin which drew all eyes upon him, but the singular calmness and noble modesty of his behaviour. There was nothing in his personal presence to distinguish him from a high-bred Spaniard. It was well known that the Borjas had dark skins among them, and the Prince of Esquilache himself was as tawny as an olive hair; and this graceful and distinguished person might be one of them, certainly a prince of royal blood. Who he was the reader had better be informed. He was of royal lineage; had graduated as a student, with distinction, at the Royal College of Cuzco, and made himself a name among the doctors of that renowned city, and was greatly beloved by its famous Bishop, of whom we shall have

something to tell in its proper place. For it was owing to the influence which the Bishop exercised over the youthful student that he went and took up his permanent abode among his own people, and settled down to the duties which the distant Caciquate of Condoriri devolved upon him.

It was in that mountain region that the Marquis of Zandunga found the man who was now attracting so much notice among the Marchioness's friends, and with whom the Marquis had formed a friendship when he went on that official journey which ended in his death. The Marquis found him ruling a vast district that was rich in all things, but most rich in men. From him the Marquis learned that the rich lands of Condoriri represented what the whole of Peru might still have been had his conquering countrymen been wise, or

even merciful. As it was, the Spaniard, in his haste to become rich in nothing else but the mere possession of gold, had destroyed the chief source of the country's wealth. For the people were destroyed; and of what avail, therefore, were the mountains out of whose sides gold and silver might be digged, if there were no longer any diggers?

A circle could have been drawn from where the Marquis then stood in Condoriri, more than five hundred miles across it, in which there had lived, within the memory of men then alive, many millions of civilized human beings, where now there could not be counted more than a few hundred thousands.

Tupac Amâru—for it was none other—further told the Marquis of certain great estates now nothing but jungle, and vast cultivated fields now deserts; and of a

far-reaching district, hard by, unequalled once in fertility, which had become a howling wilderness, and would be nothing else for evermore.

“Would the Marquis go and see it?”

And the Marquis replied that he had come from the King, his master, for no other purpose; and not only to see the great and wondrous land, but to learn the state and condition of its people—to know their wrongs, and to tell to all who cared to know it the determination of the King to redress them. It was only by this frankness, and revealing the nature of his commission, that the Marquis obtained the confidence of the mountain chief.

So, then and there it was fixed that on the morrow there should be a journey to the hills. At a sign there appeared before Tupac Amáru a man as if he had sprung out of the earth. He was clad in a

suit of close-fitting woollen armour; he was tall, lithe, intelligent, and as if accustomed to command as well as obey. To him the chief gave orders that early in the morning there should be a march to Tapachincha, one of the holy heights, and held in veneration at a time when the worship of Mama Ocllo had not been suppressed for that of the Virgin Mary.

Before the sun rose next day, a great assemblage of men appeared, drawn up in array on the slope before the chief's dwelling, who awaited his coming. As he appeared, the sun rose, and then drums beat, trumpets sounded, and the voices of ten thousand men sent up a well-sustained song of sacrificial praise—a welcome to the returning sun, and the presence of him who was a sun and shield to them.

The Marquis de Zandunga gazed in utter astonishment at what seemed to him

nothing less than a well-equipped army defiling before him. He had seen thousands of Indians elsewhere; but they were creatures who seemed to crouch through life as if they had stolen their lives, and were going to be hanged for the theft. Those before him were men, upright, firm of foot, and of dauntless front; and the sight made a thrill to pass through his whole being.

Litters were brought, and each—the chief and the Spaniard—was borne on the shoulders of twenty men, and they were carried with great speed towards Tapa-chincha, following the scouts that had gone before. The distance from the home of the chief to the summit of the mountain was several miles, but the litters were lowered on its topmost peak while yet the early morning sun was climbing the sky. The astonishment of the Spaniard could not

be concealed; and as he beheld that scene, stretched far below him and beyond, he realized for the first time that he was in a land whose greatness might once have been compared with the great empires of the earth, and have been superior to many others.

The hill up which the surprised Marquis had been carried with so much ease and swiftness was stepped in tessellated pavements of many coloured marbles, which suddenly became alive with human beings, now standing erect as spears, and now, at the lifting of a wand, falling on their faces, and the mountain made to appear as if clothed in a soft brown tint of autumn mosses. An invading army might have passed by and been none the wiser for the invisible army which could have descended unawares and destroyed it.

For more than a hundred miles in one

direction the eye, guided by snow peaks burnished by the rising sun, ran along the heights, which enclosed a valley where the shades of colour suggested innumerable fields of varied crops, and the abodes of men who lived by planting them.

The Marquis broke out into a joyous exclamation in praise of a scene which he had never heard of or beheld, and which he declared the King himself should one day come and see.

The chief then rehearsed to the Marquis how it was the valley below him had become as silent as the grave. Not a bird sang in it. The streams of water had ceased their ripple, and stood still, overcome of swamps. For the thousand homes of men which once were there, and had been there for long centuries passed, had suddenly become desolate; and, with the fathers, mothers, and children, were swept

away as if the great condors of the sky in swift armies, had swooped down among them, and carried them to the clouds.

They had perished at Potosi, and at Machacamarca, and at sundry other silver caves, "where they had gone to worship, and the caves had fallen in and crushed them."

The Marquis winced on hearing that allusion to the silver mines—the graves of ten millions of murdered men; and had nearly broken down, in spite of his being a Spaniard and a Marquis, but that he thought he discovered, in the pathos of the chief's words and the tone of his voice, a dithyramb of irony, which either ill-concealed a meditated vengeance, or was designed to suggest the possibility of its one day breaking out. But the Marquis was mistaken in this, and was only for the moment confounding his own feelings with those of another.

It was thus that the spy of his Majesty the King of Spain saw a remnant of that kingdom which the Incas, through long years of patient but firm rule, had established, and which in one little day was overthrown, as if the immortal gods had been hurled from their thrones to the bottomless pit, and carried it with them.

In his visit to this mountain region, the Marquis learned for himself that the Indian was not an obstinate dog, created for the sole purpose of being kicked and cuffed by Spanish Christians; but that he was a being with a great capacity for enjoying human kindness, and possessing a gratitude which life itself was too short for the full expression of. He learned such other things of the King's Government in Peru as will make the ears of all who shall hear them to

tingle; and the Marquis parted from Tupac Amâru as from a personal friend. Alas! they were never to meet again; and when the young chief, whose hopes of better days had been revived by the Marquis's visit, heard of his treacherous murder, he hastened to Lima to mourn for him—to become personally acquainted with the widowed Marchioness; and, as it happened, to learn many things, and to have started in his ardent mind thoughts which would have remained dormant and fruitless, had he not heard men talk in the *sala* of the Quinta del Carmen, or been asked by a noble Spanish lady to help her in avenging the murder of her husband.

At the time of the young chief's visit to Lima there was nothing stirring in that usually excited city; and so great had been the general stagnation that hardly was a

little finger moved when the Marquis met with his dreadful death. There had been times when the presence of an Indian chief of such commanding presence would have set all Lima by the ears; or he would have been laid hold of and provided with safe lodging at the expense of the Holy Inquisition, together with those who had harboured him, until the authorities had satisfied themselves that there was no mischief brewing. But the times had changed, and Tupac Amâru went about and in and out of Lima as easily and freely as a rat in the Cathedral vaults. The noble young chief had brought with him, as a present for the Marchioness, a large gold vase, which he requested might be allowed to stand in her drawing-room when she held her evening parties; and yet the sight of this vessel caused no emotion, except that of a mild pleasure.

on the part of the Marchioness and her friends: it caused no excitement, nor did it raise any turbulent hope. Men had become sick of gold, murder, Indian hunting, and lying; and the consequence was that Lima, probably for the first time in its life, was in a state of indifference or apathy. It was, however, only like the day which precedes the earthquake, or the storm at sea; when all the forces which will be let slip into wild confusion are silently being gathered into a focus, apparently for no other purpose than to make them produce a more wide-spread desolation.


But, to drop all figures of rhetoric, we will join in the general society of Lima, and see for ourselves what it is like.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

Sun "Here in this mirror
Let man behold the circuit of his fortunes;
The season of the Spring dawns like the Morning,
Bedewing Childhood with unrelish'd beauties
Of gaudy sights; the Summer, as the Noon,
Shines in delight of Youth, and ripens strength
To Autumn's Manhood; here the Evening grows,
And knits up all felicity in folly.
Winter at last draws on the Night of Age;
Yet still a humour of some novel fancy
Untasted or untried puts off the minute
Of resolutions which should bid farewell
To a vain world of uneasiness and sorrows."

The Sun's Darling.

LIFE IN LIMA — THE LOVES OF THE HAPPY YOUNG —
SILVER POTATOES — A VENUS HIPPOPOTAMUS — AND
OTHER NUMEROUS INCIDENTS WHICH GIVE RISE TO
IMPORTANT EVENTS.

"HANK God the chickens know
where to run to, and that
there is room and warmth
enough under the old wings for all who
come!"

"The 'chickens,' as you call them, will, one of these days, strip you of your feathers, and leave you to the mercy of the weather and the flies."

"No, no, Don Cariño—whom I should rather call Don Vinagre, for making so cruel a speech—my feathers show no signs of moulting, but have rather increased with my happiness. Each darling that has returned home has brought me more joy, and, I think, more life; our income has gone on increasing, and was never better than it is even now, when I am to receive into my arms the child who has been so long away."

"Is it to-day the damsel comes?" inquired Don Cariño.

"It is this blessed day; the girls have gone to fetch her. They have been all the morning preparing her room, which looks

like a nest of flowers. God bless the children!"

"And keep the convents full," responded the other, in a voice which, though somewhat dry, had no unkindness in it.

"And had I left Carmelita in the convent, would an inch of skin have been left on my bones, thinkest thou? Ever since Christmas have they counted the hours that have kept their sister from them."

"Well, why don't you marry some of them? Is it only for the warmth which the young brood imparts to the old blood that you keep them so close under your wings, as you call it?"

"God forgive me if it is," replied the lady.

"Heaven knows that I am a Catholic," said Don Cariño, "and as serious as a gravedigger; but convents for lovely girls who are full of life, and should be full of

joy, are not only a mistake, they are a juggle, and—I was going to say, a curse, only you would be hurt, and I would rather cut out my tongue than cause you a tear. If the girls were being trained for the religious life, and it was intended to cut them off from men for the remainder of their days, well and good; the earlier they go to be pickled the longer they will keep.”

“You know nothing of girls, nor convents—at least, you know nothing of Santa Clara, where the nuns are all ladies, and the pupils are daughters of gentlemen.”

“Nuns and ladies are two distinct things. A woman can be as holy, and devout, and true a nun as Santa Monica, without being a lady. But if you turn a lady into a nun, you do a very wasteful thing, it seems to me. What are they taught at this

blessed Santa Clara?" inquired Don Cariño, testily.

"They are taught discipline, obedience, a love of order, punctuality, kindness, charity, and unselfishness. They do nothing without having a law for the doing of it, and their plentiful occupations keep them cheerful and happy."

"I do not believe it."

"That does not alter the fact."

"Have the children any dolls among them?—I mean dolls that they can call their own, which they can dress as they like, sing to as they like, and take to bed with them if they like?"

The lady, with a cheerful laugh, replied that she did not think so.

"Very well; then do not tell me that they are taught unselfishness—they are more likely to be taught the very worst form of selfishness; whereas a child with

a doll to love is the child that is carried out of herself into a dreamland of the maternal joys, with their sweet and unbounded sympathies, their most tender instincts, their wonderful passions for clothing the mere image of an helpless thing with the wealth of their own lives and loves ; and this is the only way that unselfishness can be taught to young girls."

"Are any of my dear girls selfish?"

"Yes, they are," was the brisk, irascible reply. "They have no love or reverence for a man unless he is dressed in a long cloak, sings psalms, or swings a censer. Their notion of a man is, that if he is not a priest, a soldier, or a Viceroy, he is something to be made fun of; and this is the most accursed frivolity that ever got abroad in the world. Do you ever think, Lucia, of how you were dressed when you were a girl, and how the girls dress now? The

only doll these girls of yours ever had is the one that they behold in the looking-glass, and how to dress it and make it to shine is the one only serious thought which occupies their *bon-bon* brains."

Whatever truth there might have been in this remark, it had no other effect on the lady than to call forth another laugh, louder but more musical than the former, indicating that the speaker who had provoked it was only one of those privileged beings always met with in homes where the social life is highest, who is expected to utter oracles for his own amusement, if not for that of others. Don Cariño, however, was in earnest, as far as he could be in earnest in anything except the one thing which he considered the one thing needful, and he continued—

"These girls should all be married by this time; and you are to blame for keep-

ing them so long under your wing, and turning them into mere fancy poultry."

"They shall stay as long—as long—" and she paused as if to give a sense of indefinite duration to the meaning of her words—"as long as it never occurs to them to fly away."

"Well, I think you are wrong, Lucia; but it is not you alone who are to blame. I know that the pestiferous habit, or custom, or vice of this proud, luxurious city, of giving the girls all they ask for, from the first moment they can ask at all, has grown on you; and I see nothing for it but that your children must become as empty-headed, giddy, pretty, proud, useless, and unnatural as all the rest. The son of Sirach knew what he was about when he said, 'Marry thy daughter, and so shalt thou have performed a weighty matter.' But if the son of Sirach were to visit

Lima now, he would get thrown into the loving arms of the Inquisition for daring to preach common sense, and the embrace would confer immortality."

"You should quote the whole of that weighty saying of the son of Sirach: we should then agree. Shall I finish the sentence?" and she laughed cheerfully as she proceeded with the quotation—"But give her to a man of understanding." The tone of the laughter seemed to suggest—"You men are responsible for the frivolities that you condemn in women. If there were more men of understanding among you, there would be fewer giddy girls to complain of." But she contented herself with that musical form of reasoning which, being quite understood, needed no irritating words to enforce it.

She was a lovely old woman; more than sixty; but her years did not lurk in her

eyes, like poor relations in a home where their presence is unwelcome; nor did those years dog her steps like so many insolent mendicants, surrounding her with their cries of misery and lamentation. Of the sixty years that had passed over her, each had left something of its sunshine, something of its flowers. In the course of nature the number of revolving winters, doubtless, was the same as the summers; yet they had left behind them nothing of meanness of mind or maiming of body, only a sprinkling of that perpetual snow which seems to gain in loveliness the nearer it approaches the Heaven to which it tends.

Dofia Lucia de Miraflores—or the Lady Lucy, as we must call her—was the widow of a late noble Spaniard who had filled high offices in the State, and, like an honest man, had died at his post.

The discovery of enormous deposits of

silver at the Cerro de Pasco—a wild, mountainous region, some sixty leagues from Lima, and fifteen thousand feet above the level of the sea—caused such a rush to the place of Spaniards and Indians as had not occurred in all Peru since Pizarro strangled Atahualpa.

In less than six months, silver to the amount of ten millions of dollars was sent from this remarkable region; and to all appearance there was no reason why six times that amount should not be sent down, provided only sufficient hands and arms could be found to pick it up and carry it.

The discovery acted like magic on the great city. Flags and streamers were stretched across the streets through which the mules passed with their delightful burdens. The mules themselves were decked out in gay ribbons and trappings of scarlet

wool. Everybody stood still to look at them; to rub their hands with sympathetic happiness, and derive some comfort from thinking of the providence of God; for this discovery was an evident interposition of His, intended to raise the Spaniards' hopes, now somewhat faded, and replenish a treasury which had become alarmingly low.

Another providential arrangement, also highly applauded, was that these silver potatoes, as they were called, or nuggets as we should call them, were found in regions where no white man could be expected to labour—even the negro was killed off at once; but the Indian, the child of the *paramo*, the ice-bound prairie, and of the mountains, on whose summits rests everlasting snow, albeit a tropical sun beats on them its hottest fire, the Indian could alone work in those clouds of frost, that atmosphere of ice, with impunity.

"Every dog," in the universal language of the world, "has his day;" and the good day of glad tidings for Indians had evidently come. The actual discovery of the silver itself was made by an Indian; and stately Spanish history, not noted for a keen enjoyment of the truth, has condescended to record the fact that this discoverer was "one" Huari Capcha, "a shepherd." The principal deposit of the precious metal was at a small village called Cashapalca, where might be seen, even in that miracle of solitude, a peaceful colony of men, women, children, and alpacas.

Why did Huari Capcha make known his silver potatoes to the Spaniards? Did he know that thousands of these, his natural enemies, would rush up to those ice peaks and perish there? Did he know that many more would perish everlastingly for the riches that he poured into their lap?

The mountain passes which conduct to Cashapalca, across the Cordilleras, are bounded by pinnacles of rock, running sheer up to finials of perpetual glittering ice to heights inaccessible by man; and the whole scene is a chaos of shattered crystals. When the sun shines on them and through them, making vast opals, sapphires, and iris arcs, such as, except there, are only seen in dreams, the bewildered mind, unacquainted with Spanish-Peruvian ways, can compare the scene to nothing else but a fanciful way to the pit which has no bottom, these dancing hues of light—which came from heaven, but are chained there in those brilliant fragments—being nothing else but the “good intentions” of banished souls who are on their way thither.

Be that as it may, Don Esteven de Miraflores, not being over rich, and having

a large family of daughters, was ready to go from Lima as alcalde or governor of the new argentiferous regions, in order to represent Charles III. of Spain, administer the laws which had been framed for the preservation of Indian life, and, if it were also possible, at the same time to augment the Spanish revenues—and his own.

It was the custom of the Government of Lima (though it was held as doubtful if the practice came under the sanction of Imperial law) to set apart some portion of the valuable lands, in regions where the climate was bad and the attendant circumstances of the new Government were of a trying nature, for the personal use and advantage of its first governor. No governor ever better earned his "corner lot" than Don Esteven; and although he died before his term of office expired, yet the fee simple of a certain portion of the silver range was

conveyed to him and to his heirs for ever. So the Lady Lucy was left a widow, with a flock of daughters and an income from a mining property in the silver mountains, over which might pass (as a figure of speech) the road to ——!

A cousin of her husband, Don Cariño Alliaga, who, without being then introduced, took part in the conversation which opens this chapter, was joint executor with the Lady Lucy of the Miraflores estate. He was a real Spaniard, with some unbelieving Morisco phlegm in his system, fond of gardening, hot chocolate, a game at cards, and money.

The villa—or quinta, as all these houses were called—stood “in its own grounds” on the slopes of Aman-cayes, the lily-covered hills which lie some three miles north of Lima, and on the highway to the Cerro. It was a large, handsome house,

surrounded by a superb garden, and a wall, a yard in thickness, which was roofed with brilliant red tiles. Round three sides of the house, on the drawing-room floor, ran a wide, shady balcony, well supplied with dream-inviting hammocks, white straw hassocks, fans and plumeras of peacocks' feathers, and gaudy mats. Flowers crept about the balcony in the confidence of perfect love and friendliness. The silver stars of the jessamine—

“The constellated flower that never sets”—

mingled with the gold orbs of the grana-dilla; and the humming birds, their wings flashing with diamond light, spun their honey-fed lives on the flowers, like beings who give and receive equal pleasure. And this opulence of elegance and bloom suggested a life that was spontaneous and abundant, but orderly and free from all restraint.

The beauty of the Lady Lucy was exemplified by that of her children. She was like them all, as if each had been endowed from her own stock of loveliness; or they were like so many flowers of differing hues reflected in the same fountain—all unlike, yet each sharing something of the beauty of the other: the beauty of the group surpassing that of any single member of it.

The conversation which opens this chapter took place in the illuminated breakfast-room of the villa, and the occasion of it was the coming home, "for good," of the younger member of the family from the convent of Santa Clara—the great fashionable hothouse for rearing aristocratic slips and branches into bushes and trees—where she had been strictly immured for the past three years.

The laughter of the Lady Lucy at the

effect of turning the son of Sirach against Don Cariño was prolonged by an apparition which she saw through the window of the breakfast-room in the garden. It was in this wise. All the male and female servants of the Miraflores—as, indeed, of all the grand people in Lima—in house and field, were jet black; and their dresses were never of any material save snowy white muslin, calico, and occasionally cambric of the finest web. So black was the skin, so dazzling white was the dress, that it was at times difficult to recognize what kind of sentient being one saw moving across the landscape; and a short-sighted person meeting one of these forms unexpectedly, and in a retired place, might be excused for using a very hearty expression of surprise.

This was exactly what happened. Conception, the ebony cook—a tall, good-

natured woman, with the form of an early Roman Venus—was gathering flowers in the garden, close to the gate, when a little, mope-eyed, timid man came in. He was passing, on his way to the house, close by where Concepcion stood, when she moved. The small person, startled by the figure, peered at it like one scanning the darkness. Concepcion, resenting this familiarity, brought down her heavy fist so near to the eyes of the little man that he, surprised like one struck with an unearthly fright, or rather like a suddenly detected thief, fell back, his mouth filled with cursing, amongst the vegetables, and looked very much like a frog pitched on the grass. This was what the Lady Lucy saw from the window, and which increased the laughter that she indulged in at the discomfort of Don Cariño. But she did not hear the exclamation of the fallen

visitor, which not only connected the handsome black cook with Satan, but herself as well; and the dark, muscular woman, her indignation adding strength to a very vigorous arm, pulled up an enormous turnip, and dashed it in the face of her prostrate accuser.

"Cariño," the Lady Lucy exclaimed, "run into the garden—there is murder going on."

"Conchita, what have you done?" asked Don Cariño, as he hurriedly arrived on the scene.

"What have *I* done?" returned the mighty creature, expanding like a balloon, and stretching the whites of her eyes across the horizon. "He—that *zapo*, that yellow-bellied frog—has insulted me for the whole of this day, and he called the Lady Lucy a devil." (Not, strictly speaking, the Lady Lucy; but highly-dressed

and pampered ebony cooks are not without sensitive vanity.) "He fell there himself. I did not touch him, but I did throw that turnip at his head."

"Well, you have murdered him, that is all."

But Conchita, the "little pearl shell," as Don Cariño called that Venus hippopotamus, turned away in haughty indifference, and flew down the garden, shouting, in a musical voice—"The angels, the angels, the angels have come."

Two carriages, drawn by mules and driven by enthusiastic negroes, dressed in green and gold livery, had arrived at the gate, carrying what it can be no scandal to call a small chorus of the heavenly host. Murillo never painted better; and if he had painted these, the world had been richer than it is in riches that do not fade in forty years.

On the instant that the carriages stopped, the "angels," as "little pearl shell" called them, flew out of it, and flew on to that tower of ebony, surrounding her, embracing her, kissing her, and smothering her as leaves and blossoms hide the stalk on which they bloom. This was done to help the newly arrived sister to express her joy at once more beholding her old nurse; for Conchita had, fourteen years before, been purveyor of milk to the young nun.

The arrival had been witnessed by the other servants, who had watched for it, and who came out with enormous calabashes, filled with flowers and rose leaves, singing a psalm, or song, or whatever else they called it, of their own making, made there and then on the spot—

Welcome, welcome, welcome—
This is the home for thee.

Welcome, welcome, welcome—
Here mayest thou happy be.
Welcome, welcome, welcome—
Here is the home for *thee*.

And as they chanted their Gregorian music, they scattered their flowers in the air and along the path which led through the garden to the house.

And of all the happy beings in that happy home, none were so happy, in a thorough insolence of happiness, as those negro slaves. They might be compared to well-fed, well-housed animals—untainted by any connection with Adam and Eve, and endowed, for mere amusement, with human speech.

The return home of the youthful nun, as Carmelita was called on that day, was celebrated with the utmost festivity. The morning was dedicated to the domestic affections, the midday to friendship, and the evening to the world. On her arrival

she lay in her mother's arms, like a young bird in a nest. At midday the friends and companions of her sisters flocked to the villa to welcome to the gaieties and pleasures of youth one of their own class, to bring her numerous kisses and many little presents, and to enjoy for themselves that curious excitement, peculiar to young girls, which consists in finding out that which no one ever cared to conceal.

Numerous young men in gaudy dresses—the brothers and cousins, and still more emphatic connections, of the earlier arrivals—came to complete the arrangements of the day. Then the music began, and the dance; and the young people, bright with life, revelled in that bounding emotion which only youth and health, or love and hope, can display and enjoy.

The open day seemed to evoke from these young hearts expressions of tender-

ness as naturally as it called forth the songs of the birds. And, as the dance went on, the words of ecstasy found free vent—"Felisa, I adore thee!" "Juancita, I am happy!" "Anita, thy smile is sweeter to me than the perfume is to its flower!" "Florita, thine eyes are in my heart, warming while they search it." The joyous exclamations, the quick invention of pet names, the merry laughter of five hundred happy mortals, mingled with the winning tone of the harp and the guitar, testified to the spirit of revelry and enjoyment which formed the life and soul of the rich inhabitants of Lima.

But among the happy throng were those whose love was too deep for words, and one whose heart had no gladness to bestow, except on him whose glad and willing captive she had that very day become. Of all the joyous girls that animated the day with

their beauty, none wore so proud a joy on her brow as Paulina de Miraflores. She was among all the rest what an apple blossom is to an olive. And Guido Alvaro, the eldest son of the Marquis de Pan y Agua, distinguished for his commanding figure, and noted for his courage as much as for his handsome person, declared (to himself) that Paulina de Miraflores was the one maid he had ever seen worthy of a man to love.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

"A true Hidalgo's smile,
That gives much favour, but beseeches none.
His smile is sweetened by his gravity :
It comes like dawn upon Sierra's snows,
Seeming more generous for the coldness gone,
Breaks from the calm—a sudden opening flower,
On dark, deep waters."—*The Spanish Gipsy*.

"The spirit I have seen
May be the devil. And the devil has power
To assume a pleasing shape."—*Hamlet*.

THE NOBLE SON OF A BASE MARQUIS — A PHILANTHRO-
PIC FARM — TWO FRIENDS — THE DEVIL! — THE VA-
GABONDS OF LIMA.



UIDO ALVARO—el Marquisito,
or Marquis the Less—son of
the Marquis de Pan y Agua,
possessed some of the qualities of the
old type of the Spaniards who conquered
Peru, and was one of the few young men
of wholesome ambition in Lima, who pre-
ferred an adventurous life to "peacock-

ing" in the viceregal Court. He had filled the envious post of captain of the household troops, killed bulls in the terrible arena of the Plaza de Acha, assisted at all kinds of gaudy *funciones* and glittering processions, and otherwise distinguished himself in the gaieties and laborious frivolities of Lima life. He was thoroughly brave, and the sweetness and evenness of his temper testified to his thorough self-reliance.

Wearied with inglorious weariness, he forsook Lima for the mountains, where he had the good fortune to meet with Don Juan Espantoza, and through him with our gardening Marchioness; and these two men became linked together in a great scheme for cultivating Indians, llamas, alpacas, and hogs, maize and coca. The enormous basins of the Cordilleras close to the Cerro de Pasco, the valleys which run

down from these to the hot flats of the teeming earth, were full of the earth's riches; and their varied temperature brought forth an exuberance of wealth and life unspeakable. The cultivation of these gardens was both light and easy, and the crops they furnished yielded a hundredfold increase.

When the silver discoveries of the Cerro set all Lima in a blaze, it became known that the Marquisito had a vast *hacienda*, or estate, close by; and Guido Alvaro became the hero of the hour. For if the Cerro de Pasco can obtain its provisions close at hand, and there be likewise some Christian resort within reach to vary the gloomy life and rigour of the mines, and perhaps supply recruits of miners as well, why then another kingdom may be reared up, and a silver age be introduced.

The excitement in Lima when the news reached it of Guido's pigs and poultry, potatoes and maize, his llamas and alpacas, and, above all, his Indians with their increasing families, was even greater than when its discovered silver was announced. Silver there was, as a matter of course—everybody knew that; and an Indian could as easily discover it as a full-blooded Don. It was oftentimes a mere piece of luck to come on a vein of silver. There was some excitement about it, of course; but no praise or honour. But in these pigs and poultry there were genius, foresight, virtue; and the attributes of a god were lavished on the young man who was supposed to be the sole author of this most glorious farm. They called it La Providencia.

One morning Guido was smoking in the balcony of his rancho. The rancho, its face hung about with clusters of grapes,

like the tresses of a wine god, overlooked a valley six miles wide, dotted with little white houses, and here and there carpeted in great squares with green and floreted gold. If Guido, as he contemplated that peaceful scene, was thinking of the popular myth of Inca Manco Capac coming from Heaven, and founding a kingdom whose beginning was in many things to be likened to what he and his companion had there already accomplished, such thoughts were speedily scared away by the hasty clatter of a horse's hoofs entering the corral or courtyard.

The new arrival was a Spaniard, but his travelling dress was that of an Indian chief. It is difficult to translate into sober English the salutations which passed between the two men; for those greetings partook of the sunny climate, the glorious, wide scene, and the tender sky, which

seemed to embrace the smiling earth, as a passionate lover embraces his mistress.

The greetings over, and the two men being seated in the balcony of the rancho, Guido exclaimed—

“I would not give this view and this little cottage, or one day of the life we enjoy up here, for all the bedazzlement of Lima, and an eternity to enjoy it. Here I have learnt, in less than six weeks, what it is to be a man. But I have lost my courage; for I shudder to die, and at the very thought of death. I suppose, though, some trouble will come to shake me out of my happy dream, if it is only to keep me from going to sleep. Still, I have learned how to live, and am ready for anything except parting from this place. Do you know that my profane belief is that these Indians of ours know more of beauty and feel it more keenly than we do; and that they

are ten times better beings than the most Catholic Christians in all Peru or Spain? I wish you would come and live here, and bring Pancha. The people would not only love her; they would fall down and worship her, and be all the happier for it."

"I had thought of it," answered the other, "and had made up my mind to it, when the murder of the Marquis came in the way. We could not now leave the Marchioness, and I believe that she will yet do more good for this miserable country than has ever been tried by any one else. But we have something more serious to discuss. Do you know that a curse fell upon the earth last night? And lo! I bring you tidings of damnation!"

"The devil!"

"It is the devil, and none other. We have only cleared the lower part of a stream, and, like fools, we have to sit still

and see it overflown with the pollution that springs from its source."

"Well, as the devil has this time to deal with two men instead of one woman, let us see if we can fight him. You are sure it is the devil?"

"Quite sure."

"In what form does his infernal majesty deign to appear in our Paradise?"

"You have heard of an angel of light."

"Como un angel luzciente? que si."

"Well, last night they came on a cave in the Cerro, three hundred feet long, full of bright, shining silver. I went to see it, and its glitter made me sick, as if I had been compelled to gaze on the fascinating eyes of a snake that was going to crush me. It is on the Miraflores estate, and may be worth millions."

"The devil!"

"The foulest murders the world ever

reeled under will be repeated, and before our very eyes."

After a pause of some length, Guido rose, took out two enormous cigars, and handing one to his friend, they smoked on in silence. Both became unconsciously occupied with the same thought. The elder of the two was the first to speak.

"My advice is, that you run down to Lima as fast as six mules can carry you; obtain full powers from the Lady Lucy to represent her here, and to administer the estate. She will be only too happy to trust us. You will then go to the Viceroy, obtain his order permitting us to take some of our own men from the farm to the mine,* and to work it as we shall see fit.

* The law preventing agricultural Indians from being employed in the mines, though frightfully abused and trodden under foot in the distant local Governments, was rigidly observed in the department of Lima.

We can send down the silver in small quantities. We may, perhaps, prevent the greed of avarice getting excited; we may avert the disorders, and their attendant horrors, of another Huancavelica; we may keep Satan out of our own Paradise, and render a most worthy lady as well as the State some service."

The scenes of drunkenness, strife, and murder on the early gold fields of Australia and California will enable all those who are not acquainted with the history of Peru after it came into the hands of the Spaniards, to imagine the mischief which the Marquisito and his companion were plotting to avert.

The sudden discovery in the earth of enormous riches was then, as now, as sure to bring an influx of the worst human characters to the spot, as a dead carcase in the desert will bring from the clouds, or

the hills, or some other mysterious hiding-place, the vultures and condors that are otherwise never seen there. And the number of reckless men in Lima, hardened by idleness and the profession of a religion which insured full immunity from the consequences of the most atrocious crimes, was sufficient to cause the greatest apprehension to those who knew of these bad men, and the temptation that would allure them from their hidden haunts.

The vagabonds of Lima were a peculiar class, and had special privileges. They paid no poll tax, or taxes of any sort. They learnt no trade, and followed no beneficial calling; and yet they lived like sleek, highly-fed dogs. These men belonged to the class of Mestizoes—the mixed races—the offspring of Spanish fathers by Indian and negro mothers; and the worst and vilest mixture of the two was the fruit

of the Indian mother by a Spanish father. Bastards all of them; and they might be fairly compared to those curses which, like chickens that, roam as much and as far as they please in the fields by day, never fail to come home to roost at night.

When these creatures did any work, it was sure to belong to that kind which breaks some law, or undermines some social fence or fortress; so that the Mestizo obtained ultimately a definite fixed place in the universe as one of its permanent forces. "Man proposes, God disposes, and the Mestizo discomposes," was the amended refrain found current in Peru towards the end of the seventeenth century. The Mestizoes employed themselves; they knew no masters and followed no certain calling. Selling forbidden brandy to Indians, or finding out those who did so, and general smuggling, was their favourite pastime.

Not the dangerous smuggling which needed courage, and involved great risk to the neck, but quite another kind of smuggling; for the thing smuggled furnished its own letters of marque. Nor would it be any charm to this story to specify that traffic more particularly.

Besides the profligate laymen of Lima, there were in the city no less than two thousand priests; and it would be difficult to tell, to such a pitch of profligacy had the city attained, whether the priests corrupted the laymen or the laymen the priests. Perhaps the laywomen had something to do with it. It is, however, certain that they were very rich and very idle; and the idleness of a priest, it is not too much to say, is a fruitful source of mischief. With an income of three million dollars a year, it was understood that the ecclesiastics of Lima

would devote themselves to the instruction of the population, and not at all to its increase; yet did they attend to the latter more than to the former, and the Mestizoes found among them the chief supporters of their cowardly and abominable trade.

From a population thus brought into the world, and who lived in it without father, without mother, without any certain dwelling-place—who openly defied the laws, and even held at their mercy the social character and position of those who administered them, it will be easily perceived that, their number being considerable, the amount of damage they could do would be indefinite and incalculable.

Hence the alarm of the Marquisito and his friend lest the astounding discovery of silver on the Miraflores estate should

suddenly be made known in Lima. For unless very prompt measures were taken to prevent it, notwithstanding the rigour of the climate and the actual danger of the mountain passes leading to the Cerro, it would become, in less than a week, a scene of riotous drunkenness and violence, robbery and death.

So Guido Alvaro hurried away to Lima to confer with the Lady Lucy, and to propound a scheme for securing her property from spoliation, and for saving much shame to the world. The news that he carried was amazing—it could not fail to provoke a tempest of excitement; but he also carried with him a helpful plan of co-operation, which, whilst it would secure that the pleasure of a single family should not be marred, would also provide that no delirium should be caused among that class of people who


are ever ready to yield a troublesome sympathy to their neighbours when they hear of their becoming suddenly possessed of enormous wealth.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

"By the Lord, our plot is a good plot as ever was laid; our friends true and constant. A good plot, good friends, and full of expectation: an excellent plot, very good friends."—*First Part of Henry IV.*, act ii., sc. 3.

"I know this man well: he hath been since an ape-bearer; then a process-server, a bailiff; then he compassed the motion of the Prodigal Son, and married a tinker's wife within a mile where my land living lies; and having flown over many knavish professions, he settled only in rogue."—*The Winter's Tale*, act iv., sc. 2.

A MINING OPERATION—AN EVENING PARTY.

 LAS for the world! There are evil angels as well as good, and apparently as swift of wing and as eager to guide its ways.

The short-sighted wretch whom we saw half killed by a turnip shot from the arm of the black cook, and to whose rescue the Lady Lucy had sent out Don Cariño, was also a messenger from the silver Cerro,

and who had anticipated Guido's arrival by some five short hours. This Frog, as the cook had contemptuously designated the Mestizo, in communicating the news to the Miraflores of the mine "looking very good," purposely withheld any idea of the enormous value of the discovery which had been made. Still, he could assure the Señor Don Cariño that it was "something very big," and the most noble the Marquis de Pan y Agua had sent him—the lying rascal went on to say—to tell the family that, if his (the Marquis's) connection with his Excellency the Viceroy, and as a member of the Government, could be of any use, he placed his services at the disposal of the Lady Lucy, and would do all that was needed to secure protection to her interests.

Don Cariño knew enough of the world and the wicked ways of the vile rabble

of Lima to guess that possibly a hundred thousand dollars' worth of silver was already on its way from the Cerro to the royal mint, and that the payment of a little black mail would insure its safe arrival. However, he would do nothing without consulting the Lady Lucy, and therefore the Frog and the Don went from the garden into the house together.

But the Lady Lucy, full of the happiness which her beautiful children then were showering upon her, and knowing nothing of the business in hand, gave Don Cariño full power to do whatever he thought right.

Now, when a thoroughbred Scoundrel has only to deal with Avarice, clothed in the respectable garb of society, it is more than probable that in driving a bargain the Scoundrel will get it on his own terms.

Scoundrel. "The Marquis will guarantee

the delivery of three hundred thousand dollars in three months, provided that you give him control over the mine, and the power to work it as he thinks fit."

Avarice. "The noble Marquis has great power and influence, and his word is as good as his bond. But, you see, I am at present without either. Bring me the Marquis's written obligation to do this, and I promise to give him the necessary authority for working the mine and carrying down its silver."

Scoundrel. "That is all the noble Marquis desires. I will now return to him, and will be back with you, if the Marquis does not come himself, within an hour."

It is perhaps hardly necessary to say that the person known to us only as a "Frog" and a "Scoundrel"—and he need receive no other designation—had not, as yet, presented himself to the most noble

the Marquis, his scheme requiring that he should first communicate with the Miraflores, and, if he could, to obtain some such promise as that which he had just wheedled out of Don Cariño. His chief difficulty in the intrigue would then be mastered. The noble Marquis would not fail to take up the plot where the Scoundrel laid it down, and his reward was assured; and, of course, it would be ten times greater than if he had simply conveyed a piece of pleasant news to the family who owned the mine.

This plot for robbing the Lady Lucy will appear incredible, except to those who know something of how silver mining was carried on in Peru and Mexico; and the daring as well as the simplicity of the plot will also be met with incredulity, unless it be remembered how powerful and unscrupulous the nobles were in all departments of the State; how they could snatch

a villain from the scaffold, or provide it with an innocent victim; how they could and did evade all laws, or make them inoperative. There is no doubt that this method of robbery has been greatly improved since the Marquis's time, and there is as much difference between our present method of "making money" out of other people's mines and that adopted by the Marquis and his reptile go-between, as there is now between Bulls and Bears and a Yellow Frog. So that, after all, there is nothing uncommon in the "operation" which the Marquis is to carry out on the property of the Lady Lucy; since, under another name, it is now an operation of everyday occurrence in every Stock Exchange in every city throughout the Christian world.

When the Marquis de Pan y Agua heard the Frog's story of the great dis-

covery at the silver Cerro, and that he had just come from the Miraflores to beg the most noble the Marquis to become their protector, and take the mine under his own care and management, the Marquis, who knew his man, and the nature of the proposed business, was surprised only by the size of the figures; and he remarked, with the dignity becoming a Marquis—

“Three hundred thousand dollars is an enormous sum, and the payment in three months makes the transaction one of extreme hazard.”

“Marquis,” said the Frog, solemnly, his filthy yellow eyes looking like two bad sovereigns, “there are those who would be very glad to double the amount, to be paid in the same time, and who could do it with the help of fifty miners.”

“Well, well—come to me to-morrow. I will see the Miraflores myself in the course

of the day. I suppose," he added, with a peculiar smile, "you made sure of the quantity that can be sent down?"

"If, Marquis, I was as sure of not going to perdition as I am of there being more than two millions, I would begin to enjoy some of the pleasures of Heaven this very day; only I should have to ask the most noble Marquis for a hundred dollars to do it with."

The Marquis, with much deliberate politeness, put five gold doubloons into the already outstretched yellow palm of the mongrel, and the bargain was struck; and the two persons fell apart from each other as if they never had, and never could by anything less than a miracle, come together under any circumstances in the world.

The hazard of this tremendous matter referred to by the Marquis had nothing to do with the amount of money to be

paid to the Miraflores, or the time stipulated for the payment, short as it was; but much rather to the risk of its becoming known how much he had profited by it, and therefore how much the Archbishop would probably exact for shriving his burglarious soul. And here it may be remarked, as a most curious coincidence in human history, that if in Lima a Marquis "made" a hundred thousand dollars by a questionable transaction, he confessed it before Easter, on his knees, to some ghostly huckster in penances and the forgiveness of sins; and, if in these days a smart young man in London or New York does the same, he also makes his confession, but generally in the penny newspapers, or over a bottle of wine.

The *tertulia*, or evening party, at the Miraflores' was very opportune; and the

Marquis and his handsome wife set out to join the Lima world and its wife at the lovely villa on the lily-enamelled hills of Aman-cayes.

Now, if Guido Alvaro had left his farm immediately after his friend had brought him the news of the discovered silver cave, he would have arrived in Lima the first to carry the tidings to the Miraflores. As it was, the Frog had several hours' start of him, and, as we have seen, had drawn Don Cariño into an engagement with the Marquis, Guido's father; and the Marquis, understanding the matter, had given a willing, but thoroughly (Spanish) aristocratic and unimpeachable, consent thereto.

When Guido arrived at the villa, Don Cariño, therefore, received his announcement of the silver discovery with an air of intelligent coldness — supposing, of

course, that the son was merely in league with the noble Marquis his father, and had come to revise the terms in a spirit unfavourable to the family. And when Guido discovered from Don Carifio that his own father had already made overtures to the Miraflores for looking after their mine, and guaranteeing the safe delivery of their treasure, he saw that the only course open to him was to look on and hold his peace. He knew well enough what was meant by his father's overtures, although he did not know that as yet his father was only but partially, and very inadequately, informed as to the absolute certainty of the treasure in question; nor did he know how his father could have come by his information.

Don Carifio was silent and cautious, believing that the Marquis and his son had

in hand together some deep design, in which he would have to play a subordinate, perhaps a losing, part.

Guido was silent at the suggestion of his own thoughts.

The entrance of the Lady Lucy was a relief to these victims of an atrocious intrigue.

"Ah! mi Marquisito, how very welcome you are—you will stay and help us through the day?" And the dear old lady embraced Guido as if he had been her son.

Guido stayed; for, as we have seen, he fell—there is no other word for it—he fell in love with Paulina, Lady Lucy's second daughter; and Lady Lucy's second daughter met with precisely the same accident. They both fell together, she into his heart, he into hers; and the youthful pair seemed to be not two but one—one altogether, in

all that can make a man handsome and a woman happy.

Guido, although in travelling gear, was the best dressed man in the whole of that gay throng. Certainly, the handsomest. Sudden as was his fall in love, he had picked himself up with great alacrity; and he danced with the ease and grace of one who had been in love not six minutes but six months. But he danced only with the apple-blossom whose beauty and fragrance seemed to lend a lustre to his own most perfect form.

These two figures, their passionate dancing, their evident happiness, the earnest, sweet smile intended only for each other, yet seen of all the world, were not unnoticed in that glittering assembly.

Don Cariño noticed them by his own unassisted intelligence, observed upon it to the Lady Lucy; and then he told her of

the offer which the Marquis, Guido's father, had made that very day of three hundred thousand dollars, to be paid in three months, on certain conditions; which conditions the young Marquisito, his son, was well enough aware of, and wished, doubtless, to profit by. That was the real business which brought him there.

"And, Lucia," he remarked, elevating a fat finger, "there is a mighty big cat in our bag, which will not require a six-foot telescope for us to see it jump."

"Cariño," said the Lady Lucy, "you are more jealous than a woman, and as avaricious as a corregidor. It seems to me that our Paulina is as willing to be loved as Guido is to love her. Guido Alvaro," said the lady, with emotion, "is the prince of honour; and I am the happiest woman alive." Then she retired to her little chapel to give vent to her

tears, to say her prayers, and gaze with tender feeling upon the portrait of a lovely woman, holding in her arms a little child.

Only that morning had Don Cariño renewed his satirical reflections about marrying off some of the girls, and he had met with the usual rebuff. And now that an evident case of an impending marriage occurred before his very eyes, he was angry; and his antagonist, for the very same reason, was happy. Maternal affection began already to look forward through happy tears to a joyful life for one of its offspring. Avarice already began to plot for the delivery, intact and without abating one farthing, of the sum of three hundred thousand dollars; and to find out, "if three hundred thousand, then why not five hundred thousand, or even several hundred thousands more?"

If Guido, by any happy accident of sympathy, could now convey to Don Carriño that it might be not five hundred thousand, but twenty hundred thousand dollars that he might expect, what a god-like young man Guido would become in his eyes, and how thoroughly and magnificently mysterious would the round world and all Marquisitos appear?

The Lady Lucy's evening assembly was very brilliant. The Viceroy and his countess were there, with their sons and daughters; twenty marquises and their marchionesses, and the sons and daughters of these; twenty others who were not marquises, with their wives, who were not marchionesses—and all the more noble for it—and their sons and daughters. Also the Archbishop, who likewise had sons and daughters; but, wherever they were, they were not in his train. Several other high

ecclesiastics, and numerous officials in gorgeous attire, made up a scene of splendour that was of very frequent occurrence in Lima, although not at the villa on the lily-covered hills.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

“ By the course
Of nature thou should'st be as quickly chang'd,
As are the winds : dissembling as the sea,
That now wears brows as smooth as virgins' be,
Tempting the merchant to invade his face,
And in an hour calls his billows up,
And shoots them at the sun, destroying all
He carries on him.”

The Maid's Tragedy (Beaumont and Fletcher).

“ Not angular jigs that warm the chilly limbs
In heavy northern mists, but action curved
To soft andante strains pitched plaintively.
Vibrations sympathetic stir all limbs ;
Old men live backward in their dancing prime,
And move in memory.”—*The Spanish Gipsy*.

THE EVENING PARTY CONTINUES — THE MARQUIS
MEETS HIS SON — GLITTER — THE DANCE OF
FATE.



WHEN the Marquis de Pan y
Agua first saw his son Guido
dancing in happy radiance with
Paulina de Miraflores, he did not know
him. He certainly did not expect to meet

him under the same roof where he had to mature a plot for securing to himself a sack full of doubloons. But there his own son was, and apparently installed in the family affection; and doubtless on account of the good news which he had brought them of their newly discovered riches. The thing was palpable on the face of it. His travelling dress, his high spirits, his attentions to one of the girls of the family, conspired to convince the Marquis that his son had anticipated his intrigue, and was going to profit by it. He doubted and re-doubted, until the father was all but driven to the resolve of disavowing his son, and exposing him to the world. The absurdity of such a proceeding never occurred to him; he was only deterred from it by the inconvenience it would entail by having to enter into particulars which might tell against himself. But his

anger increased, till it grew into hatred; and his face bore such a forbidding expression that it was noted by many in the room; and poor Don Cariño, who was overjoyed at his coming, was struck with the greatest alarm by it, and began to doubt if the delightful news which he had received could be true.

The rage of the avaricious Marquis against his offspring was calmed by the good sense of his wife, who, knowing her husband's temper, and that for no light thing could he be so moved, approached him in a quick, cheerful manner, piloted him into a corner, and asked him to tell her what was the matter.

She was one of those women that we read of in very old books, who are as rare as that most precious porcelain which they say nobody can make now. She was still very pretty, very loving, without a stain of

the vanity which obscures the wits, and was as sensible as she was true of heart. At least, this was what her son Guido said of her; and which must be true, from the influence which she had over that mercenary, overbearing, and narrow-minded husband of hers.

When he saw his wife coming towards him with her winning face, the Marquis recovered himself of his ill-temper, and resolved to send her to Guido, to find out the truth of the whole matter; which was a sensible thing to do, and showed that his mind was clearing, and that he could act and think right enough if it pleased him.

"Harriet," said he to his Marchioness, "your son Guido is a villain. You see him shining yonder, fooling with that young girl, probably promising to marry her. Go and speak to him at once. Tell

him to choose within an hour which he will do—to leave this night for his chacra, or to-morrow to make a journey to Spain. Find out what he knows of a certain discovery of silver on the Miraflores estate, and if he has told them anything about it— But,” he added, in low mutter to himself, “of course he has told them. He could have come for nothing else.”

The Marquis, his eyes being dazzled with all that argentiferous brightness—that “angel of light,” as it had been called—could not or would not, however, see straight; and being in a wicked hurry to shoot, had shot and overshot his mark.

“Guido!” she exclaimed. “Is Guido here?”

As the mother went wending her way through the crowd towards her son, her heart yearning over him as it had when as yet he was a more palpable part of

herself, Don Cariño cautiously, and apparently without knowing it, drew near to the Marquis.

“ Ah, Marquis ! it is very kind of you to come out to see us—quite a condescension ; and the Marchioness and the Marquisito, we are really overwhelmed. But, Marquis, surely it is not true that the price of mules has risen so enormously ?—two hundred dollars a piece for cargo mules is an extortion, which the Government ought to prevent.”

The transition from the Marchioness to the mules was an accident, and was not in the least designed by Don Cariño, whilst the Marquis thought it very dexterous, and received it as an opening to the serious business that he had in hand.

“ My dear Don Cariño,” the Marquis returned, with a superior air, “ if you had found in the mountains a lump of gold two

hundred pounds weight, and you wanted to carry it sixty leagues, and there was only one mule in all the world to do it, that mule would be worth to you, not two hundred dollars in silver, but two hundred golden crowns. The scarcity of mules just now is provoking, and the price may increase, if we are not very discreet. I think, however, with his Excellency's help, we can do all that we wish. (If you will allow yourself to be excited, at least, for your own sakes, be as quiet as possible.") And the lid of the right eye of the Marquis drooped heavily at the glance of the left eye of Don Cariño.

"But, Marquis, three hundred thou—"

"Hush!" suggested the Marquis. "How much did Guido promise you?"

"Guido," replied Avarice, carried off his legs, "has promised nothing—told me nothing; he seems to have kept all his

news for the child he is amusing yonder. I think it is very likely that she knows more at this moment about how much silver will be sent down this next week than either you or I."

Don Cariño had no sooner uttered these words than, strange to say, he discovered the mistake which he had made, but it was too late to rectify it; and, seized with virtuous remorse for having doubted or suspected the Marquis, he resolved to confide in him, and to have no misgivings. He might—he saw it now—if he had been cooler-headed, played the father off against the son, but it could not be helped. And Avarice must be content to wait on power, abide its time, and cringe for its favours.

Guido, seeing his mother approaching, went to meet her, and gave her such a hearty kiss that she almost blushed, and

several other marchionesses shivered. [It was very often the case in Lima that if you could not get a certain kind of fruit to grow in your own garden, you despised it when you saw it ripen in another's.] And Guido would have lifted up his mother and carried her bodily to Paulina's corner of the room; but she restrained him, and, knowing that there was something of importance in the message which she brought from his father, took him aside, and said—

“My own Guido, how have you offended the Marquis so deeply? What has brought you here, and in this dress?—which, let me tell you, is more fit for a stable than a ball-room.”

“My own sweet mother, whom I must kiss again”—and he did—“it was, you will perhaps not believe it, but it was the devil who sent me here—at least, I came with

that impression; but since my arrival I have discovered that it was not he who sent me, but the happy God, who loves to see his children share his own joy."

"Don't talk nonsense, but answer me. What do you know of this horrid silver?"

"I knew," replied Guido, "before I came here that the Lady Miraflores had suddenly become worth several millions of dollars; but since I came I have found that she is worth a sum beyond all human calculations." And he gave his mother another kiss, as if he were intoxicated with some divine liquor.

The fond mother, who knew and never doubted her son's noble nature, though she had mourned over what she considered an inadequate return (as all true mothers do) of her own love, felt that she could ask her son what she would, and the answer would

come as true and ready as fire from flint and steel.

“And you came to tell them of their millions?”

“I came to ask them to give us the control of their estate, and to promise, if they would do this, to send down all the silver as it was most convenient. Our motive was to keep the devil out of our own paradise, by keeping this silver cave a secret to all except ourselves. But on my arrival I found that my father had already communicated with Don Cariño on the same subject, and, of course, I was put out of court. So I said nothing—asked for nothing. Don Cariño was, I thought, somewhat shy with me; and while we were holding a disagreeable and silent *junta*, the Lady Lucy came into the room, expressed her pleasure at seeing me, told me of the day's festival, asked me to stay, introduced me to

Paulina, and I stayed; because after that I could not get away, having been struck as blind as Cupid himself, though not for the same purpose."

"But Guido, my boy, how could you make love to this child, when you knew that they were to be so enormously rich? They will think you an eavesdropper, and despise you."

"Well, my charming first, and for these many years my only, love, all I can say to that is, that I never once thought of such a consequence, and am quite sure that the Lady Lucy never gave it a thought, and that Paulina has been thinking of other things; and that if such is the opinion of Don Cariño, why, it is of no importance."

"But, you blind boy, you tell me that you never told them of their riches; and how, therefore, could they think of it?"

"Oh, Don Cariño knew all about it

before I came, and I suppose he told them."

"You know that?" asked his mother, quickly.

"I know, my sweetest madre, who has not forgotten to catechize her son, that when I arrived to make my proposals, Don Cariño had already heard from my father respecting this very treasure, and had come to some arrangement with them. I was annoyed, of course, and was going away; but the Lady Lucy begged me to remain, and I have been here ever since."

"Several millions, do you say?"

"At the very least."

"Well, wait for me here till I come back, and then you shall take me to your love."

"Shall I not take you to my father?"

"No; wait here till I return."

The ball-room was now crowded, and a

heavy sea of fashionable life surged beneath the arms of Guido, threatening to float him away from the rendezvous appointed by his mother.

She came back to him sooner than she expected, beaming with delight, yet knowing nothing and caring for nothing but that the Marquis had changed his angry tone towards her admirable boy; and she seemed as if the life and bloom of her youth had returned to her. The Marquis, indeed, was hardly less affected; but the signs of it were not so flattering to him. However, his gnawing suspicions had given place to the serenity of paternal love—at least, so it seemed to the mother.

“Now, take me to *chiquita*,” she said; and she clung to her son’s arm as one who was about to be robbed.

There was no formal introduction; for as the mother drew near to Paulina, she knew

her by the fullness of her steadfast eyes, and the sweet meekness of her graceful figure, to be none other than the one being who was in love with her only son.

"I see your fortune in your eye, my apple blossom," said the mother, as she embraced Paulina. And the Marchioness became almost as passionately in love with Paulina as Guido was himself.

"Mamita," said Guido, "she says that the first time she saw me was when I killed a bull in the Plaza de Acha; and while she told me the story, she clung so hard to my arm that it has left a mark which will never rub out. However, I shall go and kill another to-morrow, to see if I am as good at the sport as ever."

"O, mi Marqueza!" exclaimed Paulina, "he shall not go." And again she clung to the arm of her lover as one who had

the strength of right to detain him from all danger.

Guido made no secret of his attachment to the lovely girl, whose society he had monopolized all the day, and before all the world; but the fact of Guido's mother being brought into the scene and ceremony of her son's love-making, placed the lovers in the light of those whose happiness confers a favour on their friends, and gives, alas! a licence to the tongues of their natural enemies.

And there were present not a few of the gay young folk of Lima, in whose breasts Guido had inflicted a wound in the days when every day found him one of their number, who were now competing with each other for the right to show their wounds to the world. So there was very little dancing. Perhaps the crowd did not admit of it, or the warmth of the breeze-

less night forbade it; or it may rather be that the palpable happiness of the two lovers formed so absorbing a topic that gossiping was preferred to dancing. The male members of the glittering throng, however, knew better; and they enjoyed—a rare occasion with them—the discomfiture of more than one circle of haughty malaperts, who had looked upon Guido as their own proper prey, and who now, for very jealousy, pitied and condoled the fate of “that child, Paulina,” while they resented “being brought there to witness her triumph.”

“Will he take her to his mountain chacra?” asked one of these pretty satirists.

“Wherever he takes her,” answered a dark-eyed beauty, “be sure that she will be ready to go, even if with bare feet.”

“And if the same chance happened

we know of none," answered a small houri whose playtime with Adonis was a thing of the past—"we know of none who would more willingly make the graceful, happy pilgrimage than herself."

"Of course I would," was the tart rejoinder; "for I should then have one to envy me who knows how to bear her pangs with such Christian resignation that her example would not fail to edify the world."

But the Lima ladies were nearly always polite to each other; the victims of their unrivalled banter were seldom or never selected from their own sex.

A poor male moth, in flaming scarlet and yellow satin, here entered the little heart-burning circle, and, in playful malice, exclaimed—

"Why this is none other than dethroned Olympus, occupied by envy, hatred, pet,

and tiff, and pique, and mortal umbrage. You will all be so yellow to-morrow with spleen, that you will spoil your complexions. There will be a fall in the price of green and blue silks, owing to a slackness of demand." And the moth laughed at his own joke, but was the only one who did so.

"Chameleon," retorted one of the fair splenetics, "you were born in that dress, and it fits and becomes you as well to-day as it did when you first soared into the air, a proud and happy being, and thought the sun was your father."

"Dost thou live on honey, pretty one?" asked another; "and didst fall into the pot from which you stole the last meal?"

But the moth was speedily on the wing, or he would inevitably have been scorched alive.

"The Marquis and Don Cariño must

be arranging the marriage settlements already; for the mouth of the one is glued as fast to the ear of the other as the lips of a young beata to the lug of a priest."

"The Marquis, rely upon it, will have little to say in the matter of Guido's marriage."

"Guido has long been a self-willed, emancipated colt, whom no one could tame or hold. Perhaps, after all, we shall see more of him when he is married," said one of the oldest and yellowest of the little, naughty ring.

Like the humming birds of their own charming flower gardens, the unmarried ladies of Lima were as varied in their beauty as they were capricious and fastidious in their tastes. That their tastes and passions were free from all vice was, perhaps, the reason why their caprice was so inveterate, and also so naïve. Guido had

been the one universally favoured and admired being among all the available young men in Lima, and this ought to speak highly in their praise. But just now, humming birds as they were, because they have discovered that from that flower never more for them should there be sucked perfume or honey, they pretended to be unhappy for the unhappiness which this reflection would be sure to bring him.

The ball-room of the Lady Lucy was too crowded, and the music of the busy talking tongues too loud, to permit of any of these freely expressed opinions being heard by any except those who uttered them and the confidential friends to whom they were imparted. And although the young nun, as she was called, in whose honour the party was given, as well as her sisters, met with all attention and kindness, yet it was a prevailing feeling among the

unattached female guests that they had been brought there to see, not the young nun return to the arms of her mother, but the best prize Lima had to offer in the form of a man carried off by one of her sisters.

Had the Marquis de Pan y Agua been a man of courage, he would have gone straight to his son, and, in a few words, satisfied himself that he was quite at liberty to carry on his plot unmolested. He might also have so revised his terms with Don Cariño as to change the entire complexion of the transaction ; and, while doing great and essential service in catching the silver fishes of the Miraflores, have netted no very small fry for himself. There was no objection to his undertaking the laborious care of the mining estate of the Lady Lucy. He could, from his position, his influence with the Government,

and his knowledge, have rendered precisely the same service, and with as good a result, as his son. But the Marquis lacked the elements of virtue, and had neither strength of mind to be honest, nor imagination enough to conceive that possibly honesty might be a game more profitable and easy than elaborate lying, or even that cunning form of thieving which the Church could pardon if it could not bless. He had been trained in a bad school. He had become so thorough a master of the crooked ways of the world, that he preferred on that very account to travel by them—making the common mistake that the straighter the road the more sure was it to be occupied, and the chances, therefore, much less for getting along. So it was that when he saw Guido and the Viceroy in long and earnest conversation, and the Lady Lucy taking a pleased interest in what was passing

between them, the crooked-brained Marquis could come to no other conclusion but that Guido was letting the silver cat out of the bag, and the Viceroy and the lady were invited to watch it jump.

Guido was simply giving an account of his farm, its productions, its climate, and the glorious wide world there was some sixty leagues from Lima, where men and women could grow, and expand upwards towards heaven. Guido's enthusiasm, his fresh, healthy, and helpful intellect, threw so much light upon the prosaic subject of farming, that the Viceroy, who knew how to follow him, became seriously attentive—not merely because it was something new and strange to hear an aristocrat talk so well, but also because the subject had occupied the home Government so long and so fruitlessly, lacking a man with any knowledge or energy to look it in the face. When

Guido, therefore, spoke of the discouragement which agriculture had received from all classes, to the manifest loss of the country, owing to the rabid madness for mining which had been encouraged and fostered, and the atrocities of which it had been the cause, and which were winked at by the ruling powers, the Viceroy winced visibly.

And the Lady Lucy smiled as Guido told how, if Paulina were to appear at his farm just as she was then, she would be received as an angel from Heaven, and that his Indians would fall down and worship her.

"But you would teach the poor things better than that," remarked the lady, with a confident smile.

"God forbid!" exclaimed Guido, with fervour. "Why should we rob them of a substantial pleasure, because we are satisfied with a shadow? These people would adore Paulina as much as I do; but for the

same reason that others adore God. I don't quite do that, because, forsooth, I was taught to adore the image of the Immaculate. They have not yet learned to do so; and if that is one reason why, in seeing Paulina, they are more able to recognise something sweeter, better, happier, more joyous than themselves—because Paulina is a living image of Heaven, and the image of the Immaculate is to them only a painted shadow, which might perhaps excite their wonder, but never their love—I should not only prefer their adoration of Paulina to the other thing, but I should consider it sacrilege to forbid it or explain it away.”

This rank heresy was laughed at as the mere eloquence of passion.

“Will your Excellency extend to me the honour of putting my philosophy to the test?” asked the audacious Guido.

The Viceroy gave his pleased consent in

a hearty laugh, and Guido went to bring Paulina to present her to his Excellency.

Then the proud and happy mother confided to the affable head of the Peruvian State the one event of the day ; how she had known Guido from his boyhood, and all about him, and that Heaven had been very gracious to her in sending her such a son.

The dumb show of all this to the suspicious, quick-eyed, and cunning Marquis was gall and wormwood. So much delight, he argued to himself, as beamed in those happy faces, was nothing more than the reflected glitter of millions of bright and shining dollars.

And the Marquis cursed his son, and went in search of Don Cariño. He saw that it was necessary to work without the Viceroy ; and to work at all, he must increase the attachment between himself and the joint executor of the Lady Lucy. He

found him in the card-room, just after winning a heavy *solo de oros*.

"Solo?" the Marquis inquired, in a cheery voice, his eyebrows expressing much sympathy.

"Solo," was the reply of Don Cariño, with a cheerful exhibition of his tongue.

The plain English of which was that Don Cariño, in playing "hearts" alone against all the table, and winning, had won five thousand dollars.

"Cariño," said the Marquis, taking his arm in courtly earnestness—which simply means being in the custody of a cultivated and highly intelligent shark—"we are playing for a high stake in this matter of your silver mine. I almost regret having ever dreamed of seeing you about it; but my desire was to serve you, and I have already compromised myself with Blastos,

and Gastos, and Fastos for their mules. This was necessary; for to-morrow they may know as much as we know, and a mule would then be as difficult to find as a woman who would prefer a kiss to a diamond necklace. To-morrow I shall send off messengers to your brother, Don Antonio, with a request for a hundred Indians to be sent with all despatch to the Cerro. Be early in the city to-morrow; our agreement remains to be signed, and there is no time to be lost. I shall now say *adios*, and leave Guido to bring home the Marchioness."

And the two parted, thoroughly satisfied. The Marquis that he had not thought it requisite to make it five hundred thousand, instead of three hundred thousand dollars; and Don Carriño satisfied that the Marquis was thoroughly in earnest, and that the original

agreement stood binding and fast. For in the course of the evening a few little words had been dropped in his ear, to the effect that it was not all silver that glittered, and that, after all, it might turn out to be only *lead!*

“Three hundred thousand dollars in three months,” exclaimed Avarice to himself, “signifies at least two hundred thousand for the Marquis six months afterwards. But if that grand and lofty son of his marries the child Paulina, do not let us examine the cards he plays with too closely. Even with a handful of trumps, the game is not sure till it is won. Great Christopher Columbus, suppose it should turn out to be lead instead of silver!—such things have happened. But the Marquis takes that risk; and we take t-h-r-e-e h-u-n-d-r-e-d t-h-o-u-s-a-n-d d-o-l-l-a-r-s in three months. Let the earth remain solid for a

few years longer. Marquis, I will take my breakfast with you in the morning."

And Don Cariño magnanimously returned to the card-room, to offer his adversaries their revenge for the *solo de oros*.

The fashionable acquaintances had gone from the villa, leaving behind the near friends who wished to bring to an appropriate close the festival of the day.

The great *sala* was cleared for a dance—*el baile de Destino*—the Dance of Fate, a deity whom it is the prerogative of recklessly happy youth to 'make fun of, but whom the old regard as their relentless foe.

A wall of female servants, in their jet black skins, white dresses, flesh-coloured silk stockings and low shoes, was formed across the great room, and along the wall were placed the maidens, to the right by

themselves, and the young men, to the left by themselves. From the uplifted hands of this living wall were suspended long festoons, or wreaths, of flowers—each wreath being composed of different flowers. So that there were rose wreaths, jasmine, lily, lobelia, and other wreaths, the colours being as distinct as if the wreaths had been silken ribbons. At a signal, each maiden seized the end of a wreath, and each man did the same; the human wall then dissolved, and fate decided the happy pair who should be linked together in the bundle of life.

The young men and maidens stood facing each other—an exotic parterre only parting them; but all holding in their hands the lines which fate had fixed for them. The extreme ends of the wreaths were all of simple leaves; so that presently none knew and none could discover—as

they stood with those mystic flowers between them—what it was that fate had decreed for its anxious victims.

It was an animated scene. Eyes flashed more precious light than diamond fire; tongues became quickened; and the laughter that rose, mingling with the flowers' perfume, made believe that some merry god had descended to partake of a joy he could not find on his own throne.

The negro servants, standing in rows along the walls, now taking the place that was before occupied by the dancers, holding lights, displayed as much ivory as would have made the statue of Love in the Silver Garden.

Conchita, the great black heroine of the turnip—thinking it no harm to interfere with the decrees of the dreadful god; or, like a happy, familiar negress as she was, believing in the sweet placidity of the

deity whose displeasure she would brave—whispered to Guido, before the ceremony began, "The silver flowers." And, oh! happy fate, and clear discerning deity, when the dance began, and the mimic sea of flowers tossed its waves on high, lo! Guido and Paulina were discovered linked together by the same wreath of floreted snow. One bond of flowers united them. The silver jasmine stars held them as sweetly together as the lesser heavenly orbs are linked to the blessed sun.

And the dance went on; the old renewed their joy in the joys of the young, the festival was brought to a happy close, and the decrees of fate, which had confirmed the delighted fancies of not a few, melted into happy dreams for some, and left no bitter taste to any.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

"Monies do much in this vile world—they're good in
love ; they make
A man of consequence and clean transforme the wildest
rake
They make the cripple run, the dumb to speke, the
blinde to wake—
Yea, he who has noe hands to use, desires good coine
to take.

* * * *

It has made the poor their vineyards lose, and homes
without a hint,
Bed, boarde, and furniture—all, all has melted in its
mint.
Through all the world the scurvie goes, hands itch to
take its printe ;
Where monie rings, as a man may saye, the eye is sure
to squinte."

Poesias del Arcipreste de Hita, A.D. 1337.

"'Tis policy and stratagem must do
That you affect ; and so must you resolve,
That what you cannot as you would achieve
You must, perforce, accomplish as you may."

Titus Andronicus.

WANTED, A HUNDRED INDIANS, AND HOW THE WANT
WAS SUPPLIED — A REMARKABLE JOURNEY — THE
BODY OF GOD, TOGETHER WITH MUCH MATTER,

HUMOROUS OR OTHER, AS IT MAY PLEASE THE
READER TO TAKE IT—CONCERNING A MAGICAL
LEAF.



THE Marquis de Pan y Agua had a fertile brain; and though he lacked the rarer courage which can face a known danger, or even an imminent cause of disquiet, yet he had daring enough to plunge into the thick of a conflict the end of which he could not see, and the dangers of which he knew to be neither few nor small.

The morning after the Dance of Fate, by his indefatigable industry six rascals were despatched from Lima to the far interior, with the special object of kidnapping a hundred men. Indians were plentiful; the Corregidores had no scruples, and no fears, except in being found out; and in the distant *Repartimiento* which the Marquis had then in his mind, there was nothing and no one to make the Corregidores afraid.

Don Antonio Alliaga, the Corregidor of the selected department, was a client of the Marquis—that is, the Marquis had supplied him, on credit, with a certain number of silk stockings, pocket looking glasses, and French kickshaws, with the benevolent and philanthropic object of making the Indians familiar with such articles of art and luxury as should improve their tastes, and give some breadth to their benighted minds. Alliaga owed the Marquis a very heavy sum for this merchandize, as well as for the mules which had conveyed it to him from Lima; and the Corregidor, being fond of gaming, and becoming sometimes, as he was then, the wanton victim of that heroic passion, his life was a sore burden to him—for he had not the means whereby he could live and show his face to his boon companions in Tinta.

The Marquis, well knowing his man,

provided two letters of different import. One offering to take in payment of his debt the *loan of, say, a hundred Indians* for a few months; and the other threatening him with instant destruction if he could not, or would not, comply with his terms. These letters were delivered to the leader of the above-named rascals, with full instructions how to use them. A thousand dollars in ready cash might be given to Alliaga if it would add any expedition to his movements.

These messengers across the mountains of Peru found the Corregidor in desperate circumstances. Their arrival was to him what cooling balm is to a bruised head. The whole district was in partial revolt. The Corregidor's authority had been laughed at, and his person threatened. He could not collect the Government poll-tax, or customs, or even his own

money for the goods which he had re-tailed to the people. He was without support of any kind. Three of his own chiefs had set him at open defiance, and these had been countenanced by one very powerful chief, who, it was said, was hostile to the King, and secretly arming to resist his authority.

It was evident that Alliaga would do all that the Marquis desired, if he could. It was certain that he would stick at nothing that could bring it about; and the leader of the rascals delighted the ear and charmed the heart of that thoroughly Spanish Corregidor by a ring of the Marquis's ready cash.

The seven formed themselves into a council of war. And be sure that what could not be done by force would be attempted by stratagem, and with more hopes of success. The stratagem was highly successful. It was this. Official

letters, written in loving words, were sent by Alliaga to the above-mentioned three chiefs, informing them that a royal commission had arrived from Lima to investigate certain charges which had repeatedly been made to the Viceroy against him, Don Antonio Alliaga, the Corregidor; that the great chief, Rutabata, should appear on the morrow at the office of the Corregimiento to prefer his charges, bring his witnesses, and as many followers as he pleased; that they should remain until all the charges had been fully and fairly met; "and may God have the great chief in His holy keeping, as he should find it to his soul's health to obey that loving command."

Each of the three chiefs received a similar letter, and they met to argue between themselves on the course they should take; and on the morrow they set out, with a host of stalwart Indians,

and appeared at the place appointed early in the day. They were received inside the white house of the Corregidor with a great show of politeness. The Indians, in their meek fashion, remained outside — some lying on the ground, some propped against the wall, and the rest squatting on their haunches, like docile animals.

The room for the reception of the chiefs was made to appear as imposing as possible, and the six rascals were got up to look as much like Spanish Dons as, to use a phrase which every one presumes to be original, "circumstances over which they had no control" would allow; and the Corregidor was as full of deference, humility, and apprehension as became one against whom very grave charges were about to be made.

It seemed that as the character of the Spaniard deepened in duplicity, that of the Indian (as we call him) became either more

reconciled to what he conceived to be his inevitable fate, or, what is less likely, became subject to gleams of a poetic hope that the Spaniards, like a very near relative of theirs, would, perhaps, some day

“Tak’ a thought an’ men’.”

Certain it is, however, that whenever the Spaniards had time to be put upon their guard, half a dozen of them, in united council, could, and always did—by stratagem, or by lying, or by some trick in carpentry or chemistry, or some other means for producing a stunning surprise—put to flight as many thousand Indians as they themselves numbered individual persons.

And the Spaniards in this case, not only being on the alert, but in desperate case, having to throw for their very lives, cast aside all scruple, and resolved upon one of those many murders which, for skill and

daring, are only associated in the annals of all history with the "Conquest of Peru." There was a large cattle-shed close to the Corregidor's house, where simple refreshments, such as the Indian loves, were prepared for the numerous followers of the chiefs, and thither they were all conducted "to partake of the King's loving cheer."

Also to be out of the reach of any call.

The chief of the royal commission—well versed in such bloody business, where cowardice and treachery required to be uppermost—opened the proceedings by reviewing the complaints which had been made against the Corregidor, and the grave issues which they involved. His Excellency the Viceroy had sent him—so he addressed the chiefs—and his fellow caballeros to see strict justice done; and it should be done, and speedily. Corregidores had long carried it with a high hand;

and the King and the Great Council of the Indies were looking forward to the time when the spread of the Church's work, the influence of holy religion and the fine arts, among their Peruvian children should be so general, deep, and sustained as that there should be no need for Spanish Corregidores; but the native chiefs should become the sole protectors of their own tribes, and be the only ministers between them and the Crown.

But, in the present case, if the Corregidor had been unjust, his life also had been threatened; and so far, the sacred majesty of the King had been outraged. To prevent disorders during the holding of the present commission, guarantees would be required; and the three chiefs must supply a hundred unarmed men, to be set apart as hostages to the commissioners, in a place where they would appoint, and

no access would be permitted them until all the charges had been gone through which the chiefs had to bring against the King's officer and representative.

To this the chiefs readily assented, and with such alacrity, that before the sun went down on that treacherous day a hundred hapless beings were all unconsciously marching to the "silver caves" of the Cerro de Pasco, three of the commissioners accompanying them. The three other commissioners speedily followed; but not before they had helped to despatch the three great chiefs on quite another march, although it led to the same end as that of their miserable followers.

It was a long and dreary tramp from Chayanta to the Cerro de Pasco; but what spurs were to the commissioners' mules, keen, glittering steel, together with some portable artillery, were to the Indians.

What! Six mounted rascals kidnap a hundred men, and drive them from their homes like a flock of sheep, for six hundred miles, across the most mountainous country in the world? Surely, the thing is incredible, or it would long ago have figured in some of the formal histories which have dealt with the woes of the human race. It must be one of those daring or audacious inventions which modern writers of fiction find so necessary in order to impart interest to what otherwise would be an ordinary, commonplace production; or just as skilful but unprincipled vendors of cheap pies throw in their spices, on purpose to cross a scent or cause a little temporary excitement.

It is, however—the shrewdness of man notwithstanding—quite true; and the only means which could be used to hinder its being believed would be either great effron-

tery, or still greater ignorance, coupled with a sufficiently powerful social interest, that for the time could invest its denial in the rank of a social virtue. But this is mere theory, and we will go on with our story.

In an incredibly short space of time, considering that those dumb driven cattle were chained together in three companies, some of the riches of the silver cave on the Miraflores estates began to flow into the elegant, opulent city of Lima, gathered up by the hands of Indians, whom the powerful influence of the most noble the Marquis de Pan y Agua had introduced upon the scene.

The progress over the mountains of that singular procession may one day be told, when the telling of it will be more easy than it is at present. That will be when incredulity has been supplied with a few

more facts, dressed in the superior garb of history, divested of all human sympathy, and warranted not to make any one laugh or cry.

Only one or two deaths occurred in that remarkable journey, and these were more accidental than anything else. For instance, the Indian, being essentially a cunning animal, would try all the means available to him (which under the circumstances would be very few) to get released from his chain. He would fall down, and pretend to be in the last agonies; or being somewhat cramped in his limbs, he would limp, and put on a piteous, supplicating look, hoping to move the hearts of his captors to pity. His captors, if they saw any real sign of their not being able to march the refractory one all the way, would release him from the gang chain by cutting off his hands, or, rather, cutting him off from

his hands, in order to prevent unnecessary delay; and the hands would be carried, still bound to the chain, as a warning to the others. The rest of the Indians took knowledge of this, and waited, before again making similar experiments, until they should come near to some human dwelling, or pass through some village. These had hitherto been carefully avoided, but it was impossible, as they came near to the Cerro de Pasco, to proceed farther without being seen or challenged of some one.

Therefore, one of the rascals rode on ahead, carefully and anxiously watching if the path was free. The slightest error committed now would undo all; and if the Indians could not be got into the mine without being noticed, and therefore inquired after, all the cost, the labour, the terrible risks which had been run, would go for nothing, and worse than nothing.

The forerunner of the procession returned to his comrades, and declared it impossible to smuggle the Indians into the silver cave. Discovery was inevitable, and stratagem therefore was necessary.

What even a set of murdering kidnappers cannot do in villainy may be done by a priest. The procession was halted some distance from the road which had finally to be taken, and kept in ambush until some suitable arrangement could be made.

The priest of Cashapalca, like the Corregidor of Tinta, was very fond of gambling, and, therefore, sometimes much in want of money. He was, one dull evening, bemoaning his luck, or the indifference of the Virgin to his prayers, when one of the escort of our kidnapped Indians entered his snug rancho, confessed his sins, implored absolution, and also a plan, for which he was ready to pay a handsome

sum, which would enable him and his friends to reap the fruit of their labours without risk to their souls, or, more important to them, their bodies.

Nothing could be more easy. Early the following morning the priest put himself in full ecclesiastical array. He came to the Indians, blessed them, unbound them, showed them some sacred pictures, showed them the "blessed sacrament," when he put some white shirts or surplices on some twenty of them; and then, in his own surplice and *gorra*, with THE BODY OF GOD IN HIS HANDS, he headed the procession, and deliberately marched it to—destruction.

That procession passed through the very valley where Guido Alvaro and his friend, Don Juan Espantoza, lived and had their estate; it passed the Customs guard and the military sentinels; and as it passed, all bowed down in worship to THE BODY OF

God, with their eyes closed. The procession was joined by many pious souls who overtook it, or whom it overtook, and the Indians went marching slowly, reverently on, to—dusty death.

As the docile creatures wound their way in real Indian file through the narrow pass of the mountain which led to the mine, there might have been seen a neat little bag or purse—called by them a *chuspá*—made of fine coloured wools, knitted by their mothers, or wives, or daughters, hanging at each man's side, and filled with dried leaves. This was all the provision they carried. For those leaves chewed with a little alkaline stuff would enable them to walk, for a fortnight at a time, with very little sleep, no other food, and not a drop of water.

Such a commissariat was an important element in an expedition got up in so much

haste, and requiring quick despatch; and but for those mysterious dried leaves, it is absolutely certain that such an expedition would never have been planned—could certainly not have been carried out.


Another advantage which this vegetable gave to the Spaniard was, that so long as the Indian received sufficient to make a quid of it, and was sure of getting another when he asked for it, he did not care what became of him or whither he went.*

* This was that magical *coca* on which men have been known to subsist for weeks together, when they had no access to ordinary food. The Spaniards attributed the virtues of this leaf to Satanic agency, but that did not hinder them from "making money" by it; and the sale of *coca* became as lucrative to the Spanish colonists in Peru as the sale of gin is to certain wealthy Christians elsewhere.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

"Her ivorie forehead full of bounty brave
Like a broad gable did itself dispred
For love his loftie triumphes to engrave,
And write the battels of his great godhed:
All good and honour might therein be red ;
For there their dwelling was. And when she spake,
Sweet wordes like dropping honny she did shed ;
And twixt the perles and rubins softly brake
A silver sound that heavenly musicke seemed to make."
The Faerie Queene.

THE POLIZON AND HIS WIFE, WHO WERE VERY
NEARLY BECOMING THE HERO AND HEROINE OF
THIS STORY, AS THEY WERE IN MANY AN INCIDENT
AND ADVENTURE WHICH REMAIN TO BE REHEARSED
IN THIS EVENTFUL HISTORY.

HILE the reader is pondering
over the absurdity of six rascals
kidnapping a hundred Indians
and murdering three great chiefs, marching
the Indians several hundred miles across the
barren Andes, and finally getting them into
the silver mines of the Cerro de Pasco, we

must return to Lima, describe another quinta, and make the acquaintance of its inmates; for they were among the very intimate friends of many persons whose acquaintance we have already partially made, as well as of others whom we have yet to know.

On the sunny slope of land which lies between the low shore of the Pacific Ocean and the brown hills which rise at the back of the city of Lima, there stood, a century ago, a small house, which, with its roof of bright red tiles, surrounded by a high, dusky wall, seemed at a distance like an island of polished coral in the midst of a yellow sea. The house was isolated, but the city could be seen from its garden gate; and from the garden inside its dusky wall, the white towers and gilded pinnacles of Lima, when seen through a haze of heat, seemed to rise close by. The blue Pacific,

although distant some seven miles to the west, appeared to be within arm's length; and the hills at the back, although far away, were brought nigh by the depth of their own most vivid colour. The oranges on the trees in the garden glowed like "golden lamps hung in a green night;" and the broad, dark green leaves of the plantain's drooped gracefully but listlessly over the wall, as if listening for something that had tarried too long in its coming. All life inside and outside of the small house, with its red hot roof, was as quiet as the life inside a stranded sea shell.

But presently, and without warning, the corridor which ran round the house seemed to be running away, and everybody and everything, that had been apparently either dead or asleep, rose up into a quick and cheerful existence.

"El almuerzo! el almuerzo! Breakfast,

breakfast, I say. Pancha! Pedro! Damaso! Hesus! Where, in the name of all the waxen-headed saints, are you? Twelve o'clock, and not even the smell of breakfast yet. Vermin of the troubled earth, do you eat with your ears and hear with your mouths? Where are ye? Breakfast, I say! Every day have I thus to storm about this everlastingly uncooked breakfast, losing my soul and my stomach at the same time."

This and much more, spoken in a high, musical voice, accompanied with the cracking of a whip, which, in his hands, never smote anything but the lazy air, announced the presence of the master of the house, Don Juan Espantoza, commonly called the Polizon. He had just returned from the mountains, and the delightful but thin air of the early morning had produced the same effect on his appetite as the news

which he bore had produced on his mind, clearing and exasperating it.

He was answered by a beautiful face from between the folds of some dark damask curtains, which separated, instead of a door, the sala from a small dressing-room.

“What, in the name of the blessed Santa Rosa, is the meaning of all this fury? Am I, then, your major domo, or, perchance, your cook?”

“Sweetest of uncanonized saints, do you think that the dressing of your hair will fill my stomach as it does your own? I say it is mid-day, and there are no signs of breakfast yet.”

“And I say,” replied the child wife of the Polizon, with seraphic archness, “that I know not and care not if it be breakfast-time; but I know that you are a great, big, ugly wonder, and, for my sins, I cannot

help hearing your great, loud, clamorous tongue, and loving your great, bright, handsome face; and, woe is me, you know it. But I think I am hungry too. Go and pull the ears of that black Pedro for not having breakfast ready. Look! Am I not beautiful?"

And she skipped into the room half dressed, her dark hair being twisted about her tiny head, and hanging about in massive, braided coils, secured with strings of pearls. The pearls, falling on her shoulders, were suggestive of white lilies wet with drops of dew.

"Am I not beautiful?" she asked again; and her happy soul went up into her husband's face in an enchanting smile.

"You are as beautiful as I am hungry, and my hunger is only equal to my haste. I must be at the palace in an hour, or the devil will have it all his own

way ; and he is no slow cook, I can tell you."

The breakfast came on in a hurricane of crockery ; the young wife, her charms now folded in a purple mantilla, arranging the gorgeous and luscious fruit into an insecure pyramid for the admiration or amusement of her husband. Amid a shower of her own laughter, and clapping of her own little hands, the pyramid of oranges and granadillas, plantains and mangoes, chirimoyas, grapes, and apples, fell to pieces on the table, and had to be picked up again ; but by that time the breakfast was, without further parley, quite ready, and the wrath of the Polizon faded away. It was but a mimic wrath—a mere device of his, to evoke the graces of his "kitten," as he sometimes called his wife. But a cloud hung over the smiles that played on his face, and he petted her as if his wife had

been a bird that perchance might fly away from him. So tender, yet so earnest, was he on that morning, that Doña Pancha would eat no breakfast, but preferred to sit close to her husband, and smile to him in return for the least glance of love which he might bestow upon her.

There was a reason for this simplicity of manner which, on account of the foreign air surrounding it, requires to be explained.

She was a Child of the Sun—a *ñusta*, or princess of royal blood. She was as beautiful as her blood was pure; and the love and faith of her race—a race illustrious for its singleness of heart—illuminated her beauty like the light which gives lustre to white flowers. And she was thoroughly happy, which made her beauty all the more wonderful. How a man could eat his breakfast like an ordinary mortal, with so

much sweetness to gaze upon, is a marvel; but then, they had been married for some time now.

Breakfast was over—and such a breakfast as, if the excitement of events will ever admit of it, will be worth describing—the Polizon was lighting his cigar, and Doña Pancha, having finished her little silver cup of chocolate, retired to her hammock in her own little room. There she cast aside her mantilla, in which she had hurriedly huddled her beautiful shoulders, pulled down the rich folds of her pearl-encumbered hair, and laid herself out for a short, happy sleep.

But the Polizon, stealthily entering his wife's room by the latticed door which opened to the garden, suddenly brought the sleepy swinging of the delicious hammock to a dead stop.

“Pancha,” he whispered, as he stole to

the ear of the dove wife—"Pancha, thou art going to be poisoned."

"Hesuchristo!" she exclaimed, starting as if stung by a snake, "what do you mean, Juan?"

"I mean that for the next few days you should drink no water from the fountain, eat no chupi or caldo, take only your chocolate, you can live on that; but eat nor drink of anything cooked in the kitchen. Order out your calesa, and go and see your friends at the Quinta del Carmen. Tell the Marqueza all that I have told you. I will meet you there in an hour after your arrival. Adios, paloma."

But the dove could for a moment become an eagle, and she fastened on to her husband as if she had been suddenly transformed into one, and she exclaimed—

"But, Juan, you are not going to leave me? Oh, Cielos, I am frightened! Juan,

dearest, if I am your paloma—your dove—you will not kill me. Tell me, and I will be so good. I cannot die, if you tell me; but if you leave me thus, I shall die at once, or go screaming into the street for help, against what I know not.”

“Thou knowest, my pearl-shell, as much as I know; and, mark, no one else in all Lima as yet knows it besides. To-morrow every Spaniard within the gates will be food for the gallinazos, and the gallinazos themselves will die; and then will come the end of the world, I should think.”

“Juan,” exclaimed his wife, eagerly, raising herself to detain him, “you have seen the Indians again from the Cerro, and it is of them you speak. Is it not so? Dearest, come and sit by me, and I will nestle into your throat, and be your own palomita.”

The charming heathenism of this beau-

tiful woman was not to be resisted, and the Polizon, being reminded of a tragedy which came near costing him his own life, and the life of his wife, remained with her for a short while, smoothed away the effects of his terrible disclosure, and did not quit her side till she bade him take his leave for the palace, while she would at once get ready and go to the quinta of the Marchioness, and wait for him there.

But hardly had the Polizon left the house, and set out on an apparently vacant stroll towards Lima, when Doña Pancha, forgetting her promise to make ready, and her assurance to her husband that she was quite quiet and as bold as a lion, no sooner found herself alone than she cried out, aloud—

“Juan, Juan! come back to me; I am so tired.”

And she fell back into her hammock,

and either swooned away or fell into a deep sleep.

She was thus found by her little maid, Zulozeto—a round, short figure, whose jet black skin seemed to be the result of accident, or as if she had been painted and dressed for a masquerade.

“Zulo, Zulo!” shrieked Doña Pancha, as she started from her sleep, pale and trembling. “Has Don Juan gone?”

“He left the house but just this instant.”

“Oh, Zuloloze, I have had such a dream. Count thy beads, and I will tell it. I saw two Indians enter the garden, and look about them like two hungry tigers. One of them took from underneath his poncho something white, which he gave to his companion, who threw it into the fountain. They then slunk under the plantain leaves to hide, and to watch. After wait-

ing a while, they stole away, one at a time. I tried to cry out, but was stifled by the devil, who held me down. You brought me water from the fountain, and forced it into my mouth, thinking to revive me. How I struggled to resist you, but in vain! And I swallowed the water, which I knew those murdering fiends had poisoned. My bones became heavy as lead, and ached as if I had been beaten with sticks. I turned black as death. I shrieked for help; but no one came. Everybody was poisoned as well as I. Then all was still and quiet as the mist creeping up the side of the mountain. In my agony, I awoke, and found thee here. Look, Zule; see how hot drops of horror have been wrung from my heart. Don Juan tells me that we shall all be poisoned, and I feel as if I were dying already."

"Señorita," said the little black maid,

“you are not well—you have a fever; and that comes from eating too much fruit, or taking too much chocolate, or getting angry before breakfast. But, *Dios mio*, what does Don Juan say?”

“If Don Juan was not Don Juan, he would be a cruel, wild beast; for he has gone and left me to be poisoned.”

“But, Doña Panchita,” replied the little servant, “you know that the Indians would rather die themselves than that you or Don Juan should feel even a toothache.”

“But, you little blackbird, everybody is to be killed, and what is the good of living then? Come and dress my hair. Tell Pedro to get the caleza ready. I will drive to the Quinta del Carmen. O, mi Marquesa, they will poison you! *Caspita*, poison! My large emerald to-day.”

And the small black person took a priceless stone from a leathern trunk, and

bound it by a thread of gold on her mistress's forehead. "Poison!" Feathered diamonds sparkled in the small curls, which seemed painted on her temples; on every finger a jewelled ring, and her little feet were literally shod with gems and pearls. More and more exclamations, too vigorous to be done into English. Then the *fustan*, or linen skirt, having a very deep border of rich lace—as deep as from the calf of the leg to the ankle. Then, with a mouth full of saints and angels, or their names, on went the *faldellin*, or over-skirt, of velvet, red or purple; open in front, to show off the *fustan*, and much that was under the *fustan*, embossed with gold, and falling as low as where the deep border of lace began of the under-skirt. Then, by the help of more saints, she got into her *jubon*, or little velvet jacket, and Doña Pancha was in full dress.

As the caleza turned the corner of the great Plaza, on its way to the quinta of the Marchioness de Zandunga, a small Spanish grandee, in velvet and feathers, remarked to his companion, in velvet and satin—

“There goes the Beauty of that Beast the Polizon, with a hundred thousand dollars on her head, and half as much on her feet.”

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

Miranda. "Your tale, sir, would cure deafness."
The Tempest.

"There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls,
Doing more murders in this loathsome world
Than these poor compounds that thou mayst not sell.
I sell thee poison."—*Romeo and Juliet.*

A PUZZLED PATRIOT — THE STREETS OF LIMA — COCK
PHEASANTS — MORE OF THE POISON — SOME COM-
MERCIAL RELATIONS WHICH SUBSISTED BETWEEN
THE METROPOLIS AND THE PROVINCES OF PERU,
BEING BOTH NOVEL AND HIGHLY ENTERTAINING,
TOGETHER WITH MUCH THAT PERTAINS TO THE
PICTURESQUENESS OF MODERN PHILANTHROPIC
LEGISLATION, EASY TO BE UNDERSTOOD BY THE
MEANEST CAPACITY.



HE Polizon walked towards the
city in a troubled spirit. The
information brought to him by
an Indian messenger on the previous day
he knew to be thoroughly reliable, and he
knew that for some time a deadly plot
against all Spaniards had been secretly

working, and which, if it succeeded, would sweep them from the soil of Peru. The Polizon was entrusted with the secret, in order that he might save his own life, and that of his friends.

The Indians of the great mining as well as of the agricultural regions, driven to acts of diabolical vengeance by the cruelties of their Spanish taskmasters, were incapable of any rational estimate of the dreadful act which they intended to carry out. They never thought—perhaps were incapable of thinking—that if they did succeed in poisoning all the Spanish inhabitants of Lima, that in a few little months afterwards another army of Spaniards, more cruel than the first, would descend upon the unhappy land, and roast every Indian in it over slow fires; or would devise some still more cunning death than that, by which the sufferers might be assured that

to live on this earth would be the uttermost—nay, unending misery for them.

But the Polizon knew this; and it was more to save the Indians than the profligate aristocracy of Lima, that he resolved to avert the judgment that was being prepared for them.

But how could this be accomplished? Lima was greatly given to pleasure, and it took its pleasures in excess. The chiefest pleasure of all, next to gaming, was intriguing. Bull fighting was, beyond all question, an absorbing amusement; but that only took place on Sundays and holidays. Intriguing had no such limit. It was the life and soul of the place, the atmosphere which it breathed, the spirit which gave form to every idea, and fashioned all men's ways, and women's ways likewise. Men intrigued against one another, and all against the ruling powers; and the ruling

powers intrigued to be able to rule. Women intrigued for the priests, children for their nurses, slaves for their mistresses, husbands against their wives, wives in favour of any one not their husbands. And as for the great and small officials, both in Church and State, there was nothing in the Ten Commandments that was not an object of intrigue with them.

How can a man thread the mazes of a spider's web without becoming a spider? How could the noble-hearted Polizon risk disclosing such information as he possessed, without being transformed into some foul monster in the eyes of those whom he desired to serve?

There was no other way for him but to go straight to the Viceroy and tell all he knew, and how he came to know it; and if that should not suffice, then to tell the Archbishop, and have all the bells of all

the churches—and there were more than a hundred—sound an alarm, get the people together, and proclaim the danger from a hundred pulpits.

For the Polizon knew that his story would be laughed at by those whom he was anxious should believe it; and if so, there would be then nothing to expect but the panic, the infuriated frenzy of a people too vicious to look a danger in the face and meet it like men, and, meeting it in the dim light, when the shadows are deepest, rush headlong to the death of fools.

So the Polizon has gone into the palace of the Viceroy; and whilst he is there, we will have a look at the outside of things, and see what this Lima is like as it was two hundred years after Pizarro planted his orange trees there, now three hundred and thirty-eight years ago.

If the palace is no better inside than it is outside, it is no better than a stable. For the outside is nothing but dead walls of mud *adobes*, or sun-dried bricks, white-washed or yellow-washed; and here and there the thin, yellow skin has fallen off, and left the mud as bare as it is in the streets, where there is plenty of it to build a hundred more of such palaces.

This is not the original palace, built and occupied by Pizarro—where, also, he was assassinated; that is on the opposite side of the same Great Plaza, and is now tenanted by barbers, tailors, shoe menders, and hat renovators—a people noted, among other accomplishments, for living without paying any rent. Nor is the palace the great central building erected by a previous viceroy, and intended to represent the temple of Jupiter Ammon—in mud. That was tumbled over by an earthquake;

and this palace, therefore, is only a make-shift, as many more of the public buildings seem to be. The Great Plaza in which it stands, and forms the whole of the north side, is spacious and impressive, with the Cathedral rising out of and forming the whole of the eastern side; and, when the setting sun literally clothes its vermilion and gold, its purple and green, its glass, and brass, and oyster shells in rich, red rays, it looks very imposing indeed. All kinds of little shops ran round the other two sides. The climate of the city was more remarkable than its public buildings. It never rained; and as the streets, the houses, the roofs of churches, and people's clothes were always dusty, the city had a dry and aged look, as if labouring under the condemnation of having to suffer an eternity of thirst.

But poor, and wretched, and withered as was the outside of the city—and as nearly

all cities are which are built by miners, silver and gold mongers, and other mongers—yet its inside life was full of character.

The eight narrow streets leading from the four corners of the Plaza were crowded day and night with picturesque people. Pantaloons had not yet found their way into the City of Kings. People—men at least—dressed like harlequins; broad cloth and black hats had not yet taken the place of velvets, satins, and feathers. The Dons went about in doublet and hose, with scarlet cloaks, lined with white silk, gold buckles in their shoes, and swords with gold and jewelled hilts at their sides; and the Doñas stepped on the stones in manto and saya, gazing at you with one eye, and that eye looking as if it had burnt its way through the surface of things. The streets were worth seeing then, and (to make the

fact impressive it might be repeated) as it never rained, and for six months in the year never even bedewed itself, the outdoor life of the city was, at certain times, one of gaiety and splendour.

The fame of the beauty of the Lima women was spread over the whole world, and no Spaniard in those days returned to the mother country without wishing himself back among the dark eyes that enraptured him in the Peruvian capital. The streets in the immediate vicinity of the Great Plaza were alive with beautiful women. At given hours of the day, and on certain days of the year, all business was suspended, in order, as it would seem, that the cock pheasants of society might get themselves admired by the hens.

Priests and monks, in hats and caps of every conceivable shape, moved about in slow and solemn measure; soldiers, and

Indians in ponchos or ruanas of rainbow hues, strutted up and down like inferior poultry; the vendors of fruits and flowers, sweetmeats, and cooling drinks made goodly groups in the streets, which added to their gaiety. Innumerable private calezas—a light and airy kind of brougham—added their testimony to the wealth and luxury which Lima enjoyed.

All the main streets were supplied with small rivers of water, called azequias. This running water was for purposes of irrigation, cooling the streets, and keeping down the dust. These azequias were supplied from the River Rimac, which ran through the city. The water for culinary operations was not supplied from the river, but from two springs which rise some four miles east of the Plaza. The springs are enclosed in a building called the Atarjea, which is situated in a dense thicket, close

to an old Indian settlement. From these springs the water is conveyed underground to a reservoir, and from thence by pipes and open azequias to more than a hundred public fountains erected in all parts of Lima. Many of these fountains were elaborate works of art, in silver and bronze. Water carrying supplied remunerative labour to numerous free negroes. The water was carried in large jars and vases, and emptied into similar large jars and vases, which were permanent fixtures inside the houses, yards, or gardens of all private dwellings. Every shop, office, or habitation, of whatever sort, or place of business, had its jar or vase, in a convenient place, which was thus regularly filled every morning by the aguador or water-carrier of the locality. The chief houses had their own private water-carriers. The circumference of the city being more than ten

miles, the water in many cases had to be carried some distance, and many houses did not receive their supply until late in the day. But no water was allowed to be carried in the principal central streets after twelve o'clock at noon.

Now, if it be the intention of the Indians to poison the Atarjea or the reservoir (the *Caja de San Tomas*, as they called it), and the poison be strong enough, and there be enough of it, and it can be readily dissolved, and no detection of it be possible to the eye, and the perpetrators of this most fiendish plot be not surprised and their intentions frustrated, then the inhabitants of Central Lima will be all stark dead after breakfast to-morrow morning!

Even now the Indians might be about it. Already death might be in many a pot, for all that the Spaniards knew. But the

preparation of their deadly drink might cause the conspirators much difficulty, whatever it is to be. It is sure to be something appropriate — appropriate not merely for the dreadful business it is intended, but for the revenge it is designed to execute. They once prepared and poured molten gold down the throats of their Spanish tormentors, as the most fearfully appropriate vengeance which the Indian could imagine. It was certainly very effective, and none of the Spaniards who drank of that liquor ever thirsted for it again. But Lima was too strong for the Indians to thrust its ill-gotten gold down its own throat in that way. Castilla de Oro was a small, unprotected settlement, in a remote part of the province of that name. The Indians were very numerous and resolute, and the Spaniards few in numbers, easily taken and bound; and after that the

red-hot, auriferous punch did its own work, and the town of Castilla de Oro ceased to exist, except in name. That was the most apposite revenge which the Indians thought they could take on Spanish men. The Spanish women were taken to the woods and made breeders of Indians, or what could be made to look like Indians as much as possible. And never since that most awful day of wrath have the Indians of Cundinamarca, or Quito, or Peru, ceased to believe, to hope, to pray that another day like unto it may speedily come to the whole Spanish race, who made of those Indians not merely slaves and beasts of burden, but fiends, maddened by the all-consuming desire of an infernal revenge.

The Polizon is a long time closeted with the Viceroy. No doubt he is urging the Indians' cause, and telling some very startling news of Indian sorrows and sufferings.

As the day has grown wondrous sultry, let us sit in the shade of these plantain trees, and tell what sort of relationship exists between this great, rich city and the far interior towns of Peru, from whence flowed that wondrous wealth which has now passed into an universal proverb; and also what it is that has possessed the Indian to seek such horrific revenge on the men whom we see strutting about, dressed as fine and looking as important as cock pheasants—golden pheasants, in more senses than one: creatures of dazzling plumage and very small heads. Let us hear the story of why these men and their wives and little ones are all doomed to become dead corpses immediately after breakfast to-morrow.

A better story and more picturesque, with fine opportunities for landscape painting and other illustrations, would be how

it is that, two centuries after the Spanish conquest, there are more "wild Indians" in Peru than there were five hundred years before that conquest; how it is that many hundreds of thousands of peaceful agriculturists and shepherds, who grew abundance of corn and potatoes, coca and beans, fruits and flowers, and carded and spun much fine wool, are now wandering through the mazy woods, living on berries, land-crabs, and coarse roots. But the story would be too long for this chapter. Suffice it to say that that was what the Peruvian Indian first did before he became a secret dispenser of poison. Living in the dismal woods, and on the borders of gloomy lakes, a prey to a thousand fears and fancies, was the actual condition in which Inca Manco Capac first found them; and the art of poison dispensing was then one of their favourite

accomplishments. How their first leader and lawgiver brought salvation to them, and gave them a name, and made a nation of them is now tolerably well known—thanks to other men's labours; but how they fell back, or were forced back by whips of scorpions into that old valley of death, is not so widely known, although it is true enough. It is known by more than one enthusiast of the present day, who is trying, heart and soul, to win them from their wild and wayward ways by means of a dead Christ well carved in ivory, and a Queen of Heaven dressed and painted like a modern consumptive Traviata.

As for the amazing wealth in Lima, there is no doubt about that. The present Viceroy, with whom the Polizon is now talking, walked, on his first arrival at Peru, over several miles of silver bars to his present palace. Take a look inside

the cathedral. You will see tons weight of gold and silver made into candlesticks and censers, chalices and shrines, images and cornices, capitals and friezes, and trappings innumerable, of a worship that rivalled in gorgeous display that of St. Peter's at Rome. Pictures by Murillo, and Guido, and Velasquez; marble statuary and pavements from Rome and Florence; stained glass from Venice; tapestries from France; ivory crucifixes; lamps, studded with emeralds, and hung with silver chains; shepherds' crooks of gold and gems; and such clothing for the shepherds, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. And there was an image of Our Lady of Sorrows, whose hands were solid gold, and her robe adorned with emeralds and pearls, sapphires and opals, and other gems of rarer worth, amounting in

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money value to more than two millions of dollars.

Well, all that might of wealth, and many millions more—easy enough to recount, but the counting would be too irksome—was stolen from the native races of Peru, and represents so much blood and tears wrung from them by the vilest forms of torture that vile men ever invented.

The amount of treasure, over and above all that remained in the country and was annually poured into Spain, can only be computed by the moth and rust which at present abound in both lands.

Now, the relationship which existed between Lima and the far distant provinces was on this wise. All trade and trading operations were exclusively in the hands of the aristocracy. Not the aristocracy by an euphuism, but the real flesh

and blood nobility of Spain, the golden pheasants of the Peruvian brood—the Marquises of Torre Tagle and Montemires; the Counts of San Donas, Luringancho, and Pan y Agua, Valdelirios, and Riobamba. These were the ironmongers, and wine merchants, and dealers in corn and French kickshaws, and a thousand *et ceteras*, who supplied the interior with dry goods. They were, of course, army and navy contractors, and—*sub rosa*—purveyors to the palace and the barracks, the hospitals and gaols. The Crown of Spain lent itself to this shameful business. For it not only sold these titles of Duke, and Don, and Marquis for money, and made enormous sums thereby, but in the patents of nobility it was specially provided that to engage in trade should not invalidate the title conferred—which was a fair proviso, seeing that

the title itself was sold over the Royal counter.

And this was not all that the Crown of Spain did for trade in Lima and Peru. As there were no more lands and Indians to give away to needy courtiers, the civil officers of the Crown—called corregidores, or magistrates, or wardens—were allowed to sell goods to the Indians in the district where they were sent to reside. And these creatures—these wardens or magistrates—literally turned themselves into bagmen, as we say, or drummers, for the noble ironmongers of Lima. Thus, for example, a Spaniard arrived in Lima accredited to the distant Corregimiento or civil district of Tinta. He was so poor that he had no money to carry him to his post of duty. But this was supplied to him by the noble lords who constituted themselves “his friends in trade.” They

likewise furnished him with a choice selection of goods suitable to the inhabitants of Tinta, mules to carry them, and men and servants to assist in the sale of goods and mules to the people. The new Corregidor arrives in Tinta and he opens his treasures, which the delighted and expectant inhabitants flock to the woods to escape the sight of! They are speedily brought back, by the help of scourges and dogs, and are brought into the church—kindly lent for the occasion by the priest—to inspect the European goods which their new officer of the Crown has brought for them to look at and buy.

Poor people! This is the third assortment of goods they have been brought to look at this year. Go and look at them yourself, reader. Here is a packet of silk gloves; another of velvet waistcoatings; another of rich brocades, suitable for our

Lady of Sorrows, the priest suggests, who is in want of a new robe. Hair powder, gold pins made of brass, earrings and finger rings of the same valuable metal, enormous tortoise-shell combs, fans, silk stockings, packs of playing cards, ribald story books for people who cannot read, and spectacles for folk whose eyes never grow dim except with weeping. You will see not one useful article of dress, or tool of husbandry among the entire heap. There is nothing but a mass of trash of the very worst kind—the mere sweepings of the fashionable shop of an aristocratic ironmonger, and dealer in fancy French articles. Including the twenty mules which have carried this hideous rubbish more than a thousand miles, the whole of the stuff is not worth five hundred dollars. It realizes, however, ten thousand dollars. And by means of coaxings, threats, and

stripes, the European goods intended by Spanish philanthropists (for these native races had also that nuisance to bear) as civilizing agents were assigned to somebody, everybody having to "buy" something; and ultimately, as the night came and covered up the scene, those goods would be consigned to the river, to be carried down to the sea, and, it may be, back to philanthropic Europe in other forms than those in which they came.

Had this noble piece of philanthropy been only occasionally bestowed, or limited in any way, this story had never been written. But it occurred every year; and now and again, three times in a year was this picturesque form of robbery committed. The extreme poor, who could only pay for the luxury of a pair of silk stockings or a pair of spectacles by their labour, were not exempted from these

exactions. The aid of the priest was often needed to explain the uses of the articles sold. These silk stockings were for votive offerings to Saint Joseph, or St. Barabbas, who had cured their legs of some sore, or the legs of their great grandmother, or—well, if none of their legs had ever been broken, or ulcered, and cured, they must then make these offerings to show their gratitude to the saints for having preserved their legs so long from harm, for the leg is a member very liable to come to sore grief. And the spectacles were to be given to their patron saints for having given them such good eyes.

Thus the powers of the world to come were happily wielded by the aristocratic traders of Lima, and all went on flourishingly; and thus we are enabled to see at a glance what a very intimate relationship existed between Lima and the distant pro-

vinces of Peru; how Lima sold goods to the Corregidor, the Corregidor "sold" them to the Indians, the priest of the church blessed the transaction, and all were happy.

And is it for compelling a man to buy a pair of silk stockings against his will that they will poison him, and his wife and children? But, then, are they silk stockings? Have they not been dyed with some infernal element by means of which not only are the legs that wear them paralysed, but the heart of him and her who have to buy them is set on fire of hell, the brain and marrow of the bones withered with despair, and the eye, turned inwards, is blinded to all the sweet influences of heaven, and made only to see a lurid light which makes the very earth and life itself hateful? This, too, is poison, doing more harm to men's souls than the poison which

the Indian intends to form part of the general Spanish breakfast to-morrow.

So that the only difference between the two poisoners is, that the one is made to pay for the poison which he receives, but the Spanish ironmongering aristocracy are to receive theirs gratis.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

"Holy St. Francis, what a change is here !"

Romeo and Juliet.

CONTAINING MORNING CALLS AT THE QUINTA DEL CARMEN, WHERE THE READER IS PROVIDED WITH A SEAT FROM WHICH CAN BE SEEN AND HEARD MUCH THAT IS NEW AND FULL OF ENTERTAINMENT.



THE Marchioness received Doña Pancha with a kiss wreathed in a smile, and Doña Pancha began kissing the Marchioness as if the heavens, withholding their ordinary rain, were raining kisses.

"Oh, Marquesa, I have brought such dreadful news. We are all as good as dead—as dead as last year's leaves; and by this time to-morrow we shall be black and blue, and stiff, and not a soul will be left alive to bury us !"

The Marchioness evidently did not believe the announcement, for she received it with a short laugh.

"We are all to be poisoned," continued Doña Pancha. "I have been poisoned already."

"So I see." And the laughing continued.

"It is the most loathsome thing, the fearfulest agony; it is a stifling torture, in which one moment seems a hundred years. You sweat blood; then your heart, and limbs, and all are turned to hard, heavy stone, and you feel as if you were being buried alive in a stone coffin."

"Hush, child! and if thy news be anything more than of a broken vase, or the death of thy little dog, let me have it with less straining of thine eyes, or I shall order you to bed and make you sip senna."

"That is the real, and only, only, only

news. Poison—Indians—azequias—you—everybody. I was poisoned an hour ago.”

“Panchita,” said the Marchioness, in a soothing tone, “you never joke, you are never ill. But now you are ill, and therefore, I suppose, are joking.”

The Panchita rose slowly out of the arms of her friend, walked deliberately into the middle of the room, as if to give solemnity to herself and her words, and stretching out her arms, as if she were a priest cursing at an altar, continued—

“Don Juan saw the Indians this morning who came to give the warning that tomorrow all the streams of water will be poisoned, all the *chapetones* become food for the gallinazos, and the gallinazos themselves will die. I asked Don Juan to take me back to the mountains, and on this very day, if he would.”

"And where is Don Juan now?" the Marchioness inquired, in the same tone.

"He has gone to the palace, and will be here in an hour."

"Very well; we will wait till Don Juan comes and tells us what to do. There is nothing worth notice in all this, and if there is, let us thank God that these poor people had it in their hearts to come and tell Don Juan, for he can save both them and us from such diabolical craft. Come and see the roses, and the picaflores, and the new arrivals from my Inca."

"What has the Inca sent you?"

"Some chinchillas."

"Alive?"

"As thou art."

The two ladies walked through the sala into a large garden, filled with the sweet magnificence of the flowering earth. After visiting the caged pets, and teasing some

and stuffing others, in whom a pampered existence seemed to have created a perpetual surliness, Doña Pancha began feeding herself on the fruit of the garden, stealing from tree to tree as rapid as a humming-bird, and looking not unlike one.

The Marchioness, in a pensive mood, stole through the trees. The two ladies were some distance apart, and at that moment an Indian—as silent and stealthy as a snake—emerged from underneath the shrubs, and came kneeling before the Marchioness, his hands pressed to his forehead, and his face bowed to the ground.

“Señora,” he uttered, in a low voice, “you are greatly loved of all our people, and I am sent to tell you that to-morrow you may not drink of any water, for all the running waters of Lima will then run with poison and swift death to those who drink of them.”

Having uttered these ominous words, he made a significant, startling gesture, and the lady turned from the Indian to see what he had descried, but saw nothing; and when she was about to confront this messenger of death, and with words of reasoning or warning try to turn him and his deluded people from their fiendish as their foolish purpose, she found the Indian gone as silently as he had come—and he had come like a shadow—leaving the Marchioness motionless with horror.

Doña Pancha, whose simply natural character enabled her to forget, as if by magic, the least as the heaviest blow that struck her, was still busy with the luscious fruit, and had observed nothing of the Indian's interview with the Marchioness. Thread-
ing her unheeded way among the trees and flowers, she came suddenly in front of the erect figure of the Marqueza, who was

gazing in unutterable agony at the blue heavens.

"Marqueza, have you seen a ghost?"

"No, an Indian."

"Where?"

"Here!"

"Diablos!"

"Yes, devils indeed; but all, all, all of our own making."

And the Marchioness, as she then stood with the beautiful Doña Pancha drawn to her side—the weak nature gazing up with wonder-opened eyes at the stronger, and the stronger nature gazing as if to penetrate to the throne of the Eternal—seemed to be the good genius of a noble people, taken captive by despair, with a grand deed to do that might clothe the doer with immortality—that, left undone, should perpetuate a shame that may last as long as lasts the human passions of love and hate,

Could the Marchioness have swayed the destinies of that day and hour, a hundred Spanish heads had rolled in the dust, a hundred thousand Peruvians been lifted from it. But she felt as helpless as straws borne on the wind. All, all beside were equally weak and worthless. There was no strength left in man; there was no power on the earth but that of Satan and his angels.

Such were the Marchioness's unuttered thoughts; and she could only stand still and look her weak gods in the face, and demand why they had forsaken her. All her hopes, endeavours, her courage, her pure, exalted faith were in one brief moment dashed to the ground, and mingled with the foulness and hideousness of death.

The Indian had kept his face concealed, but the Marchioness felt sure that he was the same who had brought her the little

silver rabbits but the day before; and he had come from the chief of Condoriri, and Tupac Amâru was, after all, nothing better than a commonplace assassin. Thus the Marchioness, in her womanly grief and in the agony of her horror, not only accused Heaven of forsaking her, but her most loyal friends with leaguering themselves with the devil. But by and by the shame of having given way to such thoughts roused the Marchioness to action, and, in the vehemence of her indignation at her own treason, she returned from the garden to the sala, carrying the little, startled Pancha with her, bent on a bold and startling enterprise.

The day began to wear. The hour appointed by the Polizon for joining his wife at the quinta had come and gone, and the Marchioness felt herself compelled to act alone. She was a woman in years, but the

fire and majesty of her race seemed, in that supreme moment of danger, menace, and outrage, to bring back the beauty and the very charm of youth, with its undaunted courage and invincible power.

The Marchioness for some years past had entered with uncommon spirit into the study of questions relating to the well-being of the old Inca families and their dependents, who had been reduced to a state of wretchedness that softened even the stony hearts of ribald men. And with such an intelligent knowledge of the past history of Peru did the Marchioness pursue her present inquiries, that she brought all her woman's sympathies to bear on it. She felt the afflictions of the native races as keenly as if they had been her own. She acquainted herself with their industries, and all that they had accomplished in the pursuit of the peace-

ful arts. But the more extended her knowledge became, the more keenly did she appreciate the ruin and desolation, the misery and incomparable sorrows of the people of that ancient kingdom which her people had overthrown. The poignancy of her grief was increased by her intimate and personal acquaintance with many of the chief actors in that woeful tragedy. The Count de Lemos, a late Viceroy, she looked upon as a common murderer. Many of the judges and chief ministers of State were, of her own knowledge, polluted with the blood of some of the best men of Peru; and she knew that their enormous wealth had been acquired only by extortion, tyranny, and insatiable greed.

These things were, from time to time, subjects of discussion in her own house, and among the numerous visitors at the Quinta del Carmen were men imbued with

the same knowledge as herself, and animated with the same spirit. But, like her, they were all powerless to control events; for their well-known private opinions shut them out from taking any part in the administration of public affairs. And whilst it is one of the most palpable facts connected with the history of that unhappy land, it is at the same time one most difficult to impress on the student of its inner life—namely, that apparently the very worst men were selected to fill the higher as well as the lower offices of trust. No doubt many would enter upon their duties with honest intentions to fulfil them; but the corruption that prevailed in every office, or official residence, court, or palace, was such that it acted as a contagion, and the best men, with one or two exceptions, were, from the first, smitten hopelessly with it.

Thus much, however, may be said in extenuation. The grave defects of the system of colonial government helped to make permanent the inveteracy of the disease. The land was literally governed to death. It was a government everywhere too officious—carelessly intermeddling, inexplicably complicated, enormously expensive; and the men who might and could have brought order out of the chaos were harassed and tormented with unavailing remedies,* innumerable quack-

* As an example, take the 25th law of the "Recopilacion de Leyes de los Reynos de las Indias," published in 1681, in which "taking the name of God in vain" is made a civil crime, and punished, in the first instance, with ten days in gaol and a fine of twenty thousand maravedis; for the second offence, thirty days in gaol and a fine of forty thousand maravedis; for the third offence, four years' transportation and a fine of sixty thousand maravedis; and if the culprit had no maravedis with which to pay his fine, then he had to serve in the galleys or elsewhere, as the judges might determine. The law concludes by exhorting the archbishops and bishops, and heads of the religious orders, to make themselves secret spies and detectives of

eries and nostrums; so that one ceases to wonder that the nation perished as it did.

The Marchioness, since recovering from the amazed surprise caused by that warning message in her own garden, was now all on fire to carry out what might issue in nothing less than a revolt against the Government of Peru. She was no longer able to weigh what might be the result to her or her friends of the course she intended to pursue. She was carried away by the womanly resolve to do something; feeling so long as she, with all her knowledge, remained an idle spectator, she was

this crime, and to denounce to the authorities all, of whatever class, who were guilty of it. It is easy to see how this abominable law might be made to work in a land like Peru, and what a source of income it might become to the royal treasury. It is very likely, however, that men from that day forward swore by other sacred names, and thus evaded the letter of the law. To this was, doubtless, also to be attributed those grotesque oaths and obscene objurgations which were only to be heard among Spanish Peruvians of all grades, sexes, and ages.

an accomplice in the crime her countrymen were perpetrating. The diabolical murder of three native caciques but a little while ago, planned by the magistrate of Tinta, and executed by the minions of the Marquis de Pan y Agua—although, of course, she was then unaware of the Marquis's complicity in that transaction—was to be the charge on which she would demand an act of public justice from the Viceregal Court; and if denied, she, the Marchioness de Zandunga, would impeach the Viceroy and all his ministers to the King, and rouse the whole country to testify against them.

This was the bold and startling enterprise she had in hand when she entered the sala with Doña Pancha from the garden. Its boldness consisted in the moral certainty that she alone would be the only person who would suffer for it.

She reasoned rightly that the horrible revenge threatened by the Indians, and which was to be carried out on the morrow, had been prompted by the recent murder of their chiefs.

This outrage had now become well known, and was then being publicly talked about throughout Lima. But no one raised his voice in reprobation; and men for the most part only curved their mouths into a pitying sneer, or deprecatingly shrugged their shoulders on hearing of it. The occurrence, though grown rare of late, was still not uncommon; and was it not well known that these native caciques, curacas, princes, or chiefs, with all their wide-spread influence and secret combinations, stood in the way of all Imperial interests, and were the principal obstacles to the permanent settlement of the country? If any one was found foolhardy enough to

express a contrary opinion, he was looked upon as a heretic or a Jew, and treated accordingly to a little fire and a few faggots.

Re-entering the sala from the garden, the ladies encountered the sombre figure of El R. P. Don Segundo de Oscuras, a person of great note in Lima, holding high office in the Church, as his peculiar garb indicated; and a man whose face and form proclaimed him to be something more than a singer of Latin litanies. He was well known to the Marchioness, and was an occasional visitor at the quinta, as indeed was every other person of importance in Lima.

The Marchioness, as if to suppress some strong feeling, received Oscuras with an ostentation of politeness.

“Most reverend father, pray be seated. Have you any news for us?”

"Most noble Marqueza, I have but a simple message to the Señora Doña Pancha,"

Now, it was the custom among all classes in Lima, when any dignitary of the Church paid a visit to a house, for the inmates to receive him with the outward form of profound reverence—the humbler folk would fall on their knees and kiss his robe; the richer people would only employ one knee in the service, and kiss the finger ring, if the office of the ecclesiastic entitled him to wear one. The ladies of this class generally had their own hands kissed, and sometimes their cheeks. The custom was apostolic. But in this present instance, the long skirt, the purple cape, and tonsured head, and hempen girdle, crucifix and ring, and the being inside of them, were all kept at a distance by the Marchioness's attitude, just as if the

awful priest had been a mere costermonger. There she stood, as in the garden, with her arm round Doña Pancha's waist, holding her to her side.

There was no embarrassment; and the Friar, in a smooth voice, with his mediæval head on one side, said—

“Your husband, Doña Pancha, remains at the palace with his Excellency, and will not be able to join you till late. He advises you to remain with the most noble the Marqueza until he arrives.”

“Oh, *mil de gracias, padre mio*, we were waiting for Don Juan to tell us what to do; and now he will not be here till night.”

This little speech of Doña Pancha altered the attitude of the Marchioness towards the purple cape and tonsured head; and, in a tone of ordinary curiosity, she inquired—

"Have you heard anything, Fray?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing of the Indians?"

"Not a word."

This was such palpable lying, that had the Marchioness been an ordinary woman, or one unaccustomed to high society in Lima, she might have been taken off her society feet, or lost her society head by it. The art defensive of lying, however, be it never so thoroughly acquired, has always the disadvantage of being beaten in detail. The Friar could lie as easily as he could pray; but he could not defend himself, nor is it in the power of mortal man or friar to defend himself from detection and discomfiture, if he fall into the hands of a high-bred woman bent on demolishing his lies.

The Marchioness, seriously alarmed by Oscuras's imitation of St. Peter's example under similar circumstances, and knowing

full well that there must be some strong reason for it, continued, in an altered tone—

“What a most unhappy thing for us all has been the murder of those Caciques at Chayanta. Did you, perchance, hear of it?”

“I heard of that only this very day,” said the Friar.

“Would you be surprised to hear that their people had determined upon a most diabolical revenge?”

“Señora Marqueza,” the Friar replied, with official emotion, “we deserve all the judgments that a just God may inflict upon us for the wrongs done to this people. Their afflictions have been such as to make them immortal. Let us pray that the sorrows they have borne in this may be more than equalled by the joys they may taste in a better world.”

The mind of the Marchioness, which had been at the utmost stretch of its tension, changed again; and this time relaxing into conversation, she reached the Friar a chair, and, with charming grace, prayed him to be seated. The Friar, notwithstanding his awful rank, was, per the sweetest force, compelled to acquiesce in the arrangement, which he did with unrelenting dignity.

"But," the Marchioness answered, placing her own chair close to that of the ecclesiastic, "the Indian has discovered that the Church provides the same hope for the Spaniard; and the horror which the Indian has of us is such, that he rushes into crime as a means of escape from the Spaniard's heaven!"

"It is a most melancholy fact."

"They dig up," the Marchioness continued, "their dead fathers, and mothers, and children from the consecrated church-

yards, and bury them in the woods, or throw them into rivers, hoping thus to escape an eternal life with us."

"Oh, Marquesa," remarked Doña Pancha, "I have heard Don Juan say the same thing."

"Don Juan," said the lady, "has seen it done."

"Then," quietly added Oscuras, "he prevented or put a stop to such sacrilege?"

"He could not."

"Did he sanction it?"

"His own life would have been endangered had he interfered."

"The Church would not acquit him of a crime if he stood by and saw that done, and made no remonstrance," the Friar remarked, without raising his eyes from the ground.

"And will the Church acquit us of crime if we stand quietly by and see these people

murdered, and we make no remonstrance? Oh, Don Segundo, if I were a man," continued the Marchioness, "I would be a preacher, and I would make all these vile countrymen of ours know, who drive these poor people to these acts, that they are ten times more worthy of hell than are the Indians. Oh! the crimes with which this land is covered are sufficient to sink it into everlasting flames."

"The Indians," said Oscuras, "are an ignorant, idle, and most obstinate race, and many of their miseries may be reasonably traced to these and other kindred vices."

"They are very ignorant, Fray," replied the Marchioness; "but what have you tried to teach them? They are idle, indeed; but what motive have you given them to work? And if they have been turned into mules, and treated far worse than ever mules

were, what wonder that they are obstinate?"

El R. P. Don Segundo de Oscuras had volunteered, for his own reasons and reasons of Church and State, to bring a simple message from the palace to the quinta, as we shall see in due time, and to acquaint himself, if it were possible, with any facts he could glean relative to the conspiracy which had been threatened against the inhabitants of Lima—all knowledge of which he had so unblushingly denied to the Marchioness. His patience was being rewarded beyond his expectation.

The Marchioness continued, with animation—

"Ignorant, idle, and obstinate? Yes; but what if it should prove that all this ignorance, idleness, and obstinacy were nothing less than a deep design to lure Spaniards to perdition? That by a most

devilish wit and humour they came to regard every kick, and lash, and bite of dog with a keen relish, and as a fiendish sacrament for the damnation of Spanish souls?"

The Friar, like all his order, was accustomed to the use of very strong language; for it was neither inconsistent with the fervent piety of the Church, nor with Spanish good breeding. He remarked, with some dryness—

"I could understand such language as your ladyship has used being put into the mouth of the Indian, but I am sure that he is incapable of either conceiving such ideas or giving expression to them."

"As much, at least, my good Fray, as babes and sucklings are capable of conceiving and uttering the praises of God."

"Most noble Marquesa, such eloquence can only spring from much knowledge and very strong feeling."

“Most reverend father, the lack of this ‘eloquence’ in men has made a poor woman speak. Nay, the very stones cry out; there is not in all this land a mountain or a plain, a river or valley, that is not eloquent with malediction. There need not have been a mountain, plain, or valley but would resound with our praise. But our murders and ravages, our extortions and more than barbarous cruelties, have turned the people we have not butchered into fiends.”

The Friar was not to be moved by the Marchioness’s excited words into any expression of opinion, other than shaking his shorn head, or bowing his fine purple shoulders.

An Indian maid, in the ancient dress of the Incas, here entered the sala, supporting on one hand a large gourd filled with many kinds of delicious fruit. Presenting it to

the Marchioness, the child, as she seemed, hastily withdrew, as if frightened.

Doña Pancha, amused at the little incident, raised her silvery voice into a laugh, and declared that all the native princesses were nothing better than little birds.

“Native princess!”

“Yes, Fray, that is my own little ñusta; and from Chayanta, too. Did you observe her dress? It is all her own work; and, young as she is, it is as beautiful as herself.”

Here the Marchioness offered the Friar some fruit.

The Friar, with a profound bow, refused.

“It is not poisoned,” she quietly said, fixing her eyes on the mediæval creature.

“Poison!” and the Friar started, as if a wasp had stung his shaven sacerdotal skull.

"To-morrow," she continued, "I can give you no such assurance. To-day we are alive, to-morrow we may be all dead; and those of us who may be spared will be pursued by a fear more horrible than a thousand deaths."

The Friar was convicted of lying, and he knew it. The Marchioness had no other motive to detain him, and he was left to his own unaided powers to take his leave of the two ladies.

Friars, having vaster powers than men, are seldom at a loss—at least, with women. The magic of a *pax vobiscum*, if rendered with art, will throw a flood of light or fold a peaceful cloud over the scene, and terminate it with "satisfaction to all parties."

Pax vobiscum—i.e., exit the Friar.

As he was trailing his reptile figure out of the room, in imitation of a Roman malefactor condemned to bear his own cross,

the Marchioness, snatching an expressive kiss from the lips of Doña Pancha, followed into the ante-sala, and, in a deprecating tone, addressed Oscuras,

“I have my fears,” she began.

“There is a conspiracy, then?”

“I had the same warning as Don Juan Espantoza.”

“By the same person?”

“I do not know.”

“But did you know the Indian, and whence he came?”

“I may not say. I may be mistaken. All Indians are so much alike.”

“But whence came he?”

“You cannot press me. I only fear and doubt.”

“The safety of the State requires you to be frank.”

“I was on my way to the palace when you arrived here.”

"Then you may confide in me. I am returning to the palace."

"My visit was not intended to be an exchange of confidences."

"It was for denunciation, doubtless?"

"It was."

Oscuras, woefully out of his reckoning, with intelligent expressiveness exclaimed, with a nonchalance peculiar to priests—

"I may still be confided in."

"It was," the Marchioness said, with some indignation, "to denounce myself, you, the State, the Church—all of us; for it is we who are the real authors of this impending crime. But, oh, we are all blind, struck blind with Heaven's anger; and you, one of its appointed messengers, know it, and still hold your peace."

"I am convinced that your ladyship knows more than you have disclosed."

"I know nothing more than my woman's wit informs me."

"His Excellency the Viceroy must know all that I have gleaned from this interview."

"I will be at the place as soon as you are."

And the two parted. Both had learned what each was bent on knowing; but at what cost to one of them?

This Friar should have been introduced at first in his full character; but the Marchioness was in such an imperious ("exalted," *Oscuras* called it) mood, that the first sight of him so precipitated the conversation, or rather speech-making, that there was no time or place in which to describe who this Fray was. He was none other than the Chief Inquisitor of the Holy Office in Lima. How so mighty a being came to be the bearer of a humble message

to Doña Pancha will be duly explained in another chapter.

“The Friar has walked out, and where’er he has gone,
The land and its fatness is marked for his own.

* * * * *

Long flourish the sandal, the cord and the cope,
The dread of the devil, and trust of the Pope ;
For to gather life’s roses, unscathed by the briar,
Is granted alone to the barefooted Friar.”

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

Richardetto. "Nay, then take mine advice;
Even for his Grace's sake, the Cardinal.
I'll find a time when he and she do meet,
On which I'll give you notice; and to be sure
He shall not escape you, I'll provide a poison
To dip your rapier's point in: if he had
As many heads as Hydra had, he dies."

Grimaldi. "But shall I trust thee?"

Ford's Works, vol. i., 143.

A PLOT INDEED.



THE interior of the viceregal palace was gorgeous. The banquet-hall was filled with gold ornaments. Everything in it was an ornament, from the carved and gilded chairs, ranged along the wainscot, to the enormous, overhanging gilt cornice. There were grotesque weapons of war, flaming banners, antique vases, statues of silver and gold as large as life, gaudy pictures,

candelabra whose crystals danced with many hues; curious little boxes, carved and dressed with silver filigree; hand screens, and parasols of glorious feathers; numerous looking-glasses, which multiplied all things; and the doors were covered with scarlet cloth, overspread with an irruption of bright, brass-headed nails.

The Polizon was shown into this room, in order to await the pleasure of the Viceroy—the ante-sala being already occupied with important visitors. After contemplating it for some time—

“This magnificent hall,” he said to himself, “is the best idea that I have ever seen of the immaculate Government of Peru! What a magnificent mess (*olla*) it is. The glitter is very expressive. So, *por Dios*, is the gold and the armour, the blow-guns, and the bows and arrows—poisoned, some of them, I dare to swear. Those cabinets

were made in Moxos; those dear little boxes came from Cajamarca; and, by the holy dove, there is Pizarro's banner! Almagro never had one. I wonder in what part of the universe those two ancients now are? The only things badly made are those of gold; but the wood, how exquisitely it is carved, and fitted, and polished!* All these Indian curiosities are works of fine art. They will be admired at the Court; the King, when he sees them, will wonder at their beauty. Oh, fools! you shoot the bird for the sake of her nest and eggs."

Passing from one object to another, he found all the provinces of the kingdom more or less represented by some piece of workman's craft, and he exclaimed—

"Mighty God! where were thy light-

* These were the work of modern Christian Indians, not of the ancient Peruvians.

nings when thou didst permit these people to be murdered?"

There was no answer to the inquiry.

An officer in blue and silver uniform here entered, and informed the Polizon that his Excellency would receive him. The private room of the Viceroy was equally characteristic with the grand sala. And the Polizon, as he bowed to the representative of the Majesty of Spain, had time to record an oath inwardly that the place looked like a cave for the reception of stolen property.

The Vice-King was a small grey man, with large, bright eyes, and eager cheekbones.

"You wished to see us on matters of importance to the State," he said, looking up from a small card which he held in his hand to the Polizon—"our time is brief, I must attend the Grand Council shortly."

The voice was husky with unfriendliness, and the viceregal manner was not gracious.

"Excellency," the Polizon began, resting one hand in the palm of the other, and presenting his full front to the Governor of Peru—"I have reason to believe that this city is condemned to a most horrible death, and that to-morrow all its inhabitants may perish at the hands of the Indians."

The Vice-King made an undignified gesture, and uttered a scandalous word.

"This is another trick of you rich traffickers to raise more troops and pocket more money. This is the third confidential warning that I have received already this morning of the same thing."

"Excellency, I do but discharge my conscience in presenting myself here. Whatever other warnings you have re-

ceived, I am ignorant of; but if they corroborate mine, the case is still more serious than I deemed it. If what I shall inform you be quite different from what you already know, the seriousness of its aspect will be even deepened."

Invoking with much indecorum the twelve Holy Apostles, the Vice-King invited the Polizon to name his errand at once.

The calmness and earnestness with which Don Juan informed the Vice-King of the intention of the Indians to poison the daily water of the city produced as great, although it was a different, effect upon him as it had done on Doña Pancha. He was like a dog tormented by a flea, biting some spot unassailable except by the flea. He spat, he fumed, he writhed, and then appealed irreverently to the Most High; then to the Saints, evincing a re-

condite acquaintance with the more secret peculiarities of their bodily frames; and thus fortifying himself to grapple with a new and most appalling difficulty, he did an act that must be called a stroke of the true genius of politeness—he conducted the Polizon to the viceregal chair, with the air of a boy who tries on his grandfather's spectacles; and then, rolling up a cigarette, he requested the Polizon to state all he knew, and what he would counsel, and he, the Viceroy, would stand still and listen.

And that was one of the most astounding and unheard-of acts of common sense ever recorded of a Spanish high officer. It is true that the Polizon was a man of charming aspect, and benign bearing; and the Viceroy was, as they say out there, a “man with many fleas;” and the little comedy was performed in the *sanctum*

sanctorum of the palace. Still, the belief and confidence reposed in Don Juan by his Excellency proves him to have been a man of perception, and with some good nature. But he had been bribed blind by the aristocratic higglers of Lima. His accumulated riches were enormous, and he was on the eve of departing for Spain, to end his days, and "prepare for Heaven."

"Observe, Excellency," the Polizon gravely remarked, "the news brought to you by some members of the Council, or others, was sent from the Corregidores who reside in the very opposite direction to Chayanta. The Iscuchanos are announced to you as being on their way, and are even to arrive here some time to-night. This is nothing else but a *ruse*—the insidious cunning of the true Indian devil. The report of the approach of the Iscuchanos, I have no

doubt, is now spreading as rapidly as a fever through the whole city, and before night the fever will be at its height."

"Will the Iscuchanos come?"

"No."

"Your reason for that?"

"The march here from their territory would simply kill them. Without horses, or means to carry provisions and arms, they would all lie down and die in the sand, even if they came within sixty miles of us. But, in order to allay the panic which this alarm was intended to create, you should send out three parties of reliable scouts, and have the heights of San Cristoval well manned and well supplied with signals. But there is no fear. It is, as I have said, a ruse—a design to cross the scent. Much more serious work remains to be done. The reservoir, no doubt, will be selected as the receptacle

of this poison—its seclusion favours the Indians' project. With authority from your Excellency, I will myself guard that point. I will take these Indians into my own keeping, and *I will poison the water with my own hand and before their eyes.*"

"You? Grand Dios! what riddles are these?"

"*With alum,*" said Don Juan, in a profound whisper. "I will convey barrels of alum to the thicket behind the Atarjea. I will, of course, meet these poor devils on their own terms—have their poison buried in a concealed place, from whence I will remove it to-morrow; and then they and I will break open the Atarjea, and throw in our own harmless alum. I will hold myself responsible for these Indians—but only on one condition; and in the meantime we shall save our countrymen from a most

horrible destruction. The alum will cause an alarm sufficiently great to frighten them—to make them wary for the future; and it will serve to convince the authors of this most fiendish, foul, yet silly plot, that their poor tools did their appointed work. *All this must be done.* I promise to do it, on your Excellency's written order commanding me to do so."

"But by the Holy Ass, this involves an intimacy with the devil and his angels that I won't sanction. Authority from me? You can do it without my knowing anything about it. 'Written authority' to consort with poisoners, assassins—the vomit of hell itself!"

The calm wisdom of the Polizon devised a plan for his own safety, which he knew too well was needed, by suggesting that his Excellency should give him, under the royal seal, *un mandamiento*, or order, to

all whom it may concern, to bring Don Juan Espantoza safe and sound into the presence of the Viceroy. This was acceded to.

"And now, Excellency, I will give these men up to you, on condition that you hang to his own gate-post the Corregidor of Chayanta."

"There may be many men in Peru who deserve to be hanged, but that is no reason why I should hang them," remarked the Viceroy, in a business tone.

"But this Corregidor murdered, in cold blood, Rutabata, Pachamata, and Hunanata; and their people will never rest till they have taken some dire revenge. I know that this plot springs in that quarter."

"You know that? You seem to know a great deal."

"It is easy to know an Indian who

comes from Collasuyu. To you, all Indians are alike; to those who know them, they are as different as a peach is from a turnip, or a tribe of humming-birds from a flock of pigeons."

"Well, I can't hang the Corregidor of Chayanta merely to please a set of Indians."

"It is better," the Polizon remarked, with much solemnity, "that one murdering thief should be hanged, than that a whole people should perish."

"Well, well, the Council assemble this morning to meet the new Visitador. I will summon you before it. You have done us great service. I thank you, in the name of his Majesty. The Council shall see you—yes, yes."

"Permit me to inquire, Excellency, if the Visitador comes armed with the fullest powers?"

“The very fullest. He has power even to supersede me.”

“May he prove a man of mettle and of sense!”

“He is none other than Don José Antonio Leche de Lobos,” responded the Viceroy.

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

' The times are big with tidings; every hour,
From east and west and south, the breathless scouts
Bring swift alarums in ; the gathering foe,
Advancing from all quarters to one point,
Close their wide crescent. Nor was aid of fear
To magnify their numbers needed now."

Southey's *Roderick*.

THE JUNTA EXTRAORDINARY.



THE arrival in Lima of a Visitador or judicial Commissioner from the Court of Madrid, and the arrival of so important a functionary having been kept secret, impressed the Polizon favourably. The Great Council was to meet before any of its members had seen him. Should he but prove to be honest, able, and, at the same time, generous-hearted, the country may yet be saved. At what an opportune moment had he not arrived!

The last Special Commissioner from Spain was the Marquis de Zandunga, the manner of whose death had somewhat interfered with the appointment of his successor. But the scandals had gone on increasing, disorders multiplied, and the royal treasury was still empty. It was necessary for the King to interfere. Complaints reached him' from all quarters of the kingdom of the cruelties and exactions of his officers, and the most circumstantial charges of theft were made against the highest officials of the Crown. These charges were nothing new; but the methods of proof were very striking, and quite new. Some of the letters of the native Caciques setting forth these accusations were full, clear, and eloquent, and contained many affecting and impressive allusions, drawn from classical authors and the Bible; and the chief of Condoriri, car-

ried away by his own fervour, wrote:—
“ The ancient city of Cuzco, once the Jerusalem of a happy people, has become a den of Cacii. It is full of cloistered virgins—mystic children of the spouse of Christ, my redeemer. They alone keep it from destruction; for neither I nor any of my fellow Caciques desire to imitate the example of a Titus, or a Vespasian, a Saul, or a proud Aristarchus. But,” &c.*

Other letters contained carefully prepared statistics of the yearly tribute, excise, and other duties, and the royal fifths derived from the mines, by which it was shown that several millions of dollars extorted from the people had never been accounted for, much less forwarded to Spain. These letters continued to multiply, and the fervently expressed desire

* Early letter of Tupac Amáru. MS. in the Biblioteca de Lima.

grew into a demand that the King would send some bold and prudent gentleman of good estate, and armed with authority sufficient to inquire into these abuses, and to punish all defaulters and all offenders against the laws. Don José Antonio Leche de Lobos was sent as an answer. The answer, however, had been long in coming, and events were hurrying to a crisis.

The Great Council to be held that morning in the palace was not the ordinary Audiencia, or Court of the Viceroy, but a Junta, or special great congress of the heads of all the public departments, civil, military, ecclesiastical, and judicial; and it had been hastily summoned at the instance of the new Visitador.

The hurried assembly of some fifty different persons of distinction in the balconies of the palace produced great fidget-

iness. And no wonder. The news of the descent of the Iscuchanos on Lima had spread among them like a wild fire on a prairie. The Iscuchanos, those ferocious cannibals who perform their murders with the most hideous tortures, were certainly coming. Not one of the Junta had heard of the impending poison, but the impending Iscuchanos was more than enough to produce the utmost consternation; and before the sitting of the Junta commenced all its members were much excited, and each seemed to be smitten with a paroxysm of flutter. If they could be likened to anything, it would be a covey of magnificent golden pheasants surprised by foxes.

A flourish of silver trumpets summoned them to the Hall of Council, and when they were all seated in two rows along the great table the sight was not impressive.

There was not a noble old face among them—nothing but shrunken foreheads, eyes that glistened only with suspicion, and lips that seemed shrivelled with imprecations.

Don Antonio Leche de Lobos, the new paraclete, descended from Madrid to bring comfort to all men and plenty of golden honey to the King's Majesty, had the face of a rat. He was introduced to the Junta by the Viceroy, and a flourish of trumpets followed the pronouncing of his name.

Then the Archbishop of Lima, a man of flesh, made a very long speech, welcoming him to Peru; and Leche de Lobos responded by saying that he would make quick work of any who, corruptly, contumaciously, or treacherously should be found guilty of having disturbed the peace of those kingdoms.

The members of the Junta were in a

very reserved mood. They resented the secret manner in which the Visitador had come among them. They knew nothing of him, nothing of his temper or political colour. He was a mere apparition; and from his personal appearance, the tone of his speech, and some of its more emphatic expressions, they came to the conclusion that he would not be accessible to a bribe, or allow himself to be caught in a trap. He might be an enemy; he was certainly not a friend. Who had ever heard of a high Government official entering the city of Lima like a thief in the night? What could avail him without the help of these permanent residents? The Viceroy, who had now been three years in Lima, had all that time been kept powerless to act without their co-operation, without their knowledge and experience. He hardly knew anything of the geography

of Peru, how much less of its resources! And what, then, could this new arrival be said to know? It would be well to let the Visitador feel at once how dependent he was upon their intelligence and means of gaining information. So, after the preliminary business of the Junta had been cleared away, the Count de Pan y Agua rose like one accustomed to be listened to, and introduced to the Congress the approach of the hateful and malignant Iscuchanos. He dilated on the risks which the great city of Lima ran, and the temptations it offered to hostile cannibals; he traced the efforts that had been made in past times for the suppression of these hordes, or for safety against their attacks. The defence of the city was still incomplete, for the great wall which surrounded it was still without guns. There were some thirty-four bastions along the whole

wall, but not even a popgun was mounted on one of them. The fort of Santa Catalina was in tolerable condition; but it was too isolated, and could only defend the eastern side. The nine principal entrances should be strengthened, and the guard increased. The suburb of San Lazaro was utterly unprotected, and if an entrance was forced into the city, it would come from that quarter.

“Señores, the Iscuchanos may even now be lying in ambush at our gates.”

“The Iscuchanos—the Iscuchanos!”

And the same paroxysm of flutter was repeated in the council chamber as in the balconies. After the Count de Pan y Agua had resumed his seat, a loud and informal conversation commenced. The Viceroy and the Visitador became engrossed in consultation, and the Congress relapsed into private gesticulations and whisperings.

Leche de Lobos was secretly but keenly enjoying the fact that he had evidently entered Lima at a great or unusual crisis. His craft and ability were excited, and he intently watched the different members of the Congress who were taking the most active part in it. As the Viceroy imparted to him the secret information which he had received from the Polizon, his countenance assumed that intensified aspect which marks the face of an animal of the lower species when in sight of its unwary prey.

It was a pardonable vanity that, in such a state of affairs and under such circumstances, the Viceroy should be tempted to make himself appear superior in information and wisdom to the members of the Junta, on whom he was generally dependent for both. So he addressed them in gentle rebuke on the panic which had overtaken them ; drily

ridiculed the advent of the dreadful Iscuchanos; and, in a solemn voice and manner, imparted to them the plot then hatching for the destruction of the inhabitants of Lima.

The Congress became intensely agitated; but its excitement, strange to say, was not produced by the startling revelation the Viceroy had made to it, so much as by the fact that without the help or private confidence of a single member of the Junta the Viceroy should have any opinion of his own; but how much more that he should have startling and independent information, to use as he might please! Here was a phenomenon!—a Viceroy with independent opinions and private information. There was hardly a man among them who had not handsomely bribed his Excellency in some adequate and acceptable manner to betray his private feel-

ings and opinions, or never to indulge in having any, on matters pertaining to the government of Peru. And his Excellency had frankly accepted all the gifts—gold and frankincense—which those corrupt creatures had offered him on that understanding, and had shown a most hearty appreciation of those gifts by occasionally asking, in a covert way, for more. If then, as it would seem, the Viceroy had betrayed them to this rat of a Visitador—in order, of course, to secure safety for himself—they would have their revenge. It would be at the risk of their own destruction; but revenge to these men was sweeter than life itself without it.

The minds of men weakened by crime, or their finer sensibilities blunted by willing familiarity with it, are never free to act in great emergencies. It is then that the chains which the outraged mind has forged

for itself begin to gall, and the whole man is bound in fetters of suspicion, or hate, or doubt, or fear ; or all these become welded into one overbearing and mastering passion, according to the private grounds for the suspicion, the hate, the doubt, or the fear. It was thus with these men : this Leche de Lobos could hang every one of them, if he only knew them all as well as each knew the other, or even as much as the Viceroy could tell him.

It is quite certain that, had there been time or opportunity for the Viceroy to have communicated with the members of the Council on the disclosures made to him by the Polizon, he would have done so. But none of the members of the Council knew that. The arrival of Leche de Lobos had also been kept as great a secret from the Viceroy as from the members of the Council, and neither were they aware of

this. Hence their most painful suspicions and profound mistrust; and hence, also, a series of silent plots, and a thread of intrigue running through the Junta which would never have reached its present development if it had been possible for three words of explanation to have passed between the Vice-King and his friends.

It was an infinite relief to many when El Reverendo Padre Don Segundo de Oscuras, the Inquisitor-General, and ex-officio member of the Council, rose to speak. He was the only one among all the officials there who had not now to suffer any inconvenient reflections from having bribed the Viceroy—the only one, probably, of all the Council, who retained his presence of mind. In a few calm words, he suggested that his Excellency should supply to the Council such facts and witnesses as would enable them then and

there to look this weighty matter in the face, and crush it.

"Most certainly," answered the Viceroy.
"Conduct hither Don Juan Espantoza."

And the officer in blue velvet and silver filigree disappeared, and returned with the Polizon.

With the exception of Leche de Lobos, the Polizon was well known to all the Council, and his appearance there did not reassure those aristocratic ironmongers and dealers in French kickshaws, spectacles, and silk stockings. The Polizon, however, was well known for other reasons than for holding aloof from the society of Spanish officials.

There he stood, in the midst of the Junta, fresh and open, like a tree by the waterside, seeking no favour; yet prepared to do most generous service; inviting all criticism, and caring nothing for the

most hostile remarks that might be expressed.

A thousand questions were asked and answered, the answers being as quickly given as the questions were asked, many of them being pregnant with terrible meaning.

“ You say,” said the Visitador, “ that this infernal poisoning is to be done to-night. Give me some reason for believing you.”

“ Well,” the Polizon replied, with unaffected dignity, “ many members of this Council have known me for twenty years, and they know that I never lie. It was I who gave the alarm of the intended massacre in the Yungus. It might have been prevented ; but I was laughed at, and my counsel was despised, and several hundred Spanish souls reeled drunk into eternity in consequence. I informed the Count de Lemos, our then Viceroy, that if he hanged

that loyal and true-hearted Spaniard, Don José Salcedo, that he would defeat his own object, and make life very precarious to all highborn Spaniards in Peru. The object of the Viceroy was to possess himself of the richest silver mine ever opened in these kingdoms. Salcedo was hanged on a charge of treason, on the Viceroy's order, whilst his only crime was being the rightful owner of a large amount of silver treasure. But the day that Salcedo was executed that mine was, by Indian cunning and craft, hidden for ever from Spanish eyes, and beyond the possibility of any Spaniard's discovery. And so it will remain as long as any Spaniard remains in this country. I rode more than a thousand miles in four days and as many nights to ward off an attack on the royal remittance that was sent from Potosi. I was ridiculed for my pains, but his Majesty's

officers were slain, and a million of his Majesty's dollars stolen. All these acts were done by Indians, who had suffered a millionfold more cruelties than they inflicted; and yet not one of those acts need ever have been perpetrated had my information been acted upon. These are a few reasons why you should believe my statements, and have some confidence in me. I could supply others still more cogent—if, that is, I am required to state thus publicly what is known privately to many present of my relations with the native races of these kingdoms."

To this the Archbishop replied, in a tone of voice which seemed to charge the room with great solemnity, that the native races were incorrigible; and that, after all had been done for them, they were nothing but a source of care to the Church, anxiety to his Majesty the King, annoy-

ance and loss to the Spanish settlers. The speech of the Archbishop seemed to be designed as a screen between the Great Council and the native races referred to.

Leche de Lobos, frowning till his eyes became obliterated in wrinkles, and who evidently was paying no attention to the Archbishop, exclaimed—

“Don Juan Espantoza, you will, perhaps, give us your reason for believing in this plot—how it came to be surrounded with so much mystery, and also how *you* came to be entrusted with the keeping of so momentous a secret.”

The Polizon, with unruffled temper, replied, addressing himself to the whole Council—

“The danger to myself in holding this secret consists solely in my having communicated it to you. My conscience, being clear of wishing to make you accomplices

in this intended atrocity, gives me no uneasiness as to the danger I run in telling you of it. The reason of my knowing it is simply because the Indians wish to save my family and friends and me from being poisoned. Why it is surrounded with so much mystery is because it is purely an Indian plot; and no Spaniard, Negro, or Mestizo is mixed up with it. Permit me to add that my strongest reason for disclosing this plot to your lordships is a strong desire to befriend the Indian—who is a being without ordinary knowledge, who is cut off from the sympathy of his fellow-beings, who could and would help him if they had the chance to do so. Allow me, with all respect, to say also that I discussed with myself the danger of being found in possession of the facts which I have communicated to your honours, and I came to the conclusion that I

was bound to confide in you, and place myself at the disposal of his Excellency."

"How long," inquired Leche de Lobos, his face still wrinkled like a raisin—"how long has this plot been hatching?"

"I should say," said the Polizon, turning himself full face to his questioner, and raising his voice, "ever since the murder of the chiefs Rutabata, Pachamata, and Hunanata by the Corregidor of Chayanta."

"How know you that?" quickly asked Lobos, in no friendly voice.

"By the exercise of a little common sense," replied the Polizon, modestly, but with much firmness.

"Well, what about the Iscuchanos?" continued the Visitador, who was gaining new facts at every turn.

"I have already told his Excellency what I now tell you," said the Polizon—"that the subject of the Iscuchanos is not

of the value of the breath which is required to pronounce their horrid name."

Leche de Lobos, somewhat irritated by the high tone and unbending manner of the Polizon, and believing him to have a guilty complicity in some infernal plot that was somewhere being elaborated for execution in some unguarded hour, turned to the Viceroy, and was again absorbed in private conversation. Excepting the Viceroy, and perhaps, secretly, the Visitador, there was not one of all the Junta who had the simple mother wit to see that the best and only method of testing the value of the Polizon's remarkable testimony was to act upon it. But although the whole question was so stupendous, so unwonted, yet the only thing they could think of was the certainty of the Polizon being implicated in the business, and how they could best convict him of it,

It was here intimated to the Polizon by the Viceroy, whose voice was friendly, that the Council would deliberate; and that he, Don Juan Espantoza, would return to the ante-sala, attended by an officer.

On returning from the council chamber, and in crossing the main corridor of the palace, the Polizon encountered a missionary priest, whom he knew as a "labourer" among the Indians, and who had come to bring the dreadful news that the Iscuchanos were really within a day's march of the city.

"For the love of God," said the Polizon, after a hearty greeting, and in more than playful earnestness, "step over to the Quinta del Carmen—ask for my wife; tell her that I may not be able to see her till late, but that she is to remain with the Marchioness till I come," and so passed

on to the ante-sala—a prisoner in the guise of a guest.

The be-blued and silvered officer, thoroughly alive to the importance of what had passed between the Polizon and the missionary priest, communicated it to one of the Council in whom he saw the value of being on friendly terms. This was not one of the magnificent ironmongers, nor even the Viceroy nor the Visitador, but Oscuras, the Chief Inquisitor.

The Chief Inquisitor consulted, in the fussy officiousness which the circumstances permitted, with Leche de Lobos.

“Ah! here we have the very hinge of the conspiracy. Would the most reverend father undertake that message himself, see which way that door opened, and learn all he could?”

Oscuras was, perhaps, the only being in the Council who could be trusted—cer-

tainly the only one capable of smelling a treasonable plot in the Quinta del Carmen.

He went; and it has been seen what passed between him, Doña Pancha, and the Marchioness.

The Council continued its sitting; the Visitador descended from his chair of state, mixed with its various members, and conversed on the absorbing topic of the hour. The arrival of the missionary priest, with later and more authentic news concerning the descent of the Iscuchanos on Lima, increased the general bewilderment; but when this arrival was followed up by another and still another respectable messenger of the same sacred order, bearing the same news, but brought from different points of the compass, it became evident to all men that the Polizon was mixed up in some plot too deep at present for them to unravel or understand, except that part

of it which related to the coming of the avenging Indians, and which, for his own purposes, he had affected to treat with so much doubt and disdain.

“Who is this Don Juan Espantoza?” inquired Leche de Lobos privately of the members of the Junta, receiving a different answer from each, and the answers being all such as to convince the Visitador that Don Juan was not a person to be trifled with. If it could be proved that he belonged to any conspiracy it would be most important, as, doubtless, he would be the leading member of it, if not its very life and soul. It would be an Indian conspiracy, if any: he was almost worshipped by the Indians. His enormous wealth had been supplied by them; all his social relations were with Indian chiefs; his wife was the daughter of one of the most powerful Caciques in the kingdom, and

she was her father's sole heir. His life and conversation in Lima were mysterious; few knew anything of his movements. He never gambled, he had no trade. But unquestionably he was *un hombre de bien*—a good man—and his boast that he “did not lie” was unassailable. He had accompanied the last royal Visitador, the Marquis de Zandunga, on his official tour; and was still on very intimate terms with his widowed Marchioness, who was something of a political *beata*, but she was no *beaton*. That is, she was a devout and loyal Spaniard; but who cherished wild notions of Spain being able to make a great kingdom of Peru by giving more power to the native chiefs and less to royal officials. That, however, she was no hypocrite was proved by her well-known fondness for the natives, and the interest she took in their wrongs, as she called them.

Leche de Lobos listened to all these praises with marked attention, and he awaited with growing impatience the return of the Grand Inquisitor from his visit to the Quinta del Carmen.

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

"Paying the fine of rated treachery."—*King John*.

"I ne'er heard yet
That any of these bolder vices wanted
Less impudence to gainsay what they did
Than to perform it first."—*Winter's Tale*, act iii., sc. 2.

"A maze of corridors contrived for sin."—BROWNING.

CONTAINING THE TROUBLES OF A VICEROY AND THE
TRIALS OF VIRTUE — THE PLOT THICKENS — SOME
FRESH LIGHT THROWN UPON THE SPANISH WAY OF
GOVERNING THE PERUVIANS — BEING PERFECTLY
LIGHT AND EASY READING.



THE Reverend Father in God,
Don Segundo de Oscuras, on
his return from the Quinta del
Carmen, found the members of the Council
still in eager conjectural talk; their flutter
of anxiety had not subsided, but it had, by
sundry jerks from one suspicion to another,
increased. On taking his seat, all eyes
were turned upon his unearthly counte-
nance, which was more like that of a

murdered thief turned up to the moon than of a living Christian. He rose to speak, and the opening of his lips made a sound like the tearing of paper.

"I denounce the Marchioness de Zandunga as a traitress to the King, and in league with conspirators."

These were his first words, and they were met with a sougning chorus of "ahs!" "ehs!" "ohs!" and "ums!" from the members of the Council, who were now sure that, by the aid of the Chief Inquisitor, they would at least be certain of a victim; and in the hunting and harrying of which unhappy mortal the true scent would be crossed, and their own crimes be easily passed over.

"The wife of Don Juan Espantoza, commonly called the Polizon," continued the ecclesiastical reptile, "is likewise privy to the same conspiracy; and both these

women will be interrogated by the Court of the Holy Office."

The effect produced by these frightful words was very diverse. The Viceroy ardently cursed in his innermost soul the ill-luck which had so long detained him in Lima, and his lips were seen moving in inarticulate prayer, doubtless to the Queen of Heaven (he would hardly venture to address its King on such a topic), that he might yet be able to leave Lima all safe and sound, and his money bags all secure; and he would then erect in her name and to her honour a marble shrine in his own native city in Spain.

Leche de Lobos, the Visitador, began to feel alarmed for his prey. If the discovery of this conspiracy slipped through his fingers into the filthy, blood-stained machinery of the Inquisition, he would gain no credit by the transaction, and enjoy no plea-

sure in hunting the quarry which he had started.

While each member of the Council was thinking what the probable consequences to himself would be of having to do with so diabolical a crime as that of burning alive, in a solemn act of faith—or *auto de fé*, as these Spanish Christians called it—the noble Marchioness, and the lovely humming-bird wife of the Polizon, the officer in waiting, looking more blue than usual, entered the chamber, and privately informed the Viceroy that the Marquesa de Zandunga was without, and would speak with him.

The situation was terrible. The Viceroy had secretly determined upon delivering the two ladies from the horrible indignities intended for them; when, lo! the greatest of them was thrown into his arms,

and he himself would be compelled to become her executioner.

With more determination than might have been expected from him, the Viceroy rose in the Council, and exclaimed, in a loud voice—

“ This Junta is adjourned,” rang his little bell, and, bowing to the Visitador, retired from the room.

The rest followed, Leche de Lobos and the Inquisitor being left alone in private conversation.

As the Archbishop of Lima, in his purple robe and scarlet stockings, and a green velvet hat as big as a bolster, waddled along like a magnificent turtle, or an elephantine penguin dressed for a masquerade, he remarked, alluding probably to the weather, or it might have been to the business in hand—

“ How hot it is !”

The air was certainly hot and stifling. The city, likewise, was in an excited state. The Plaza was full of men, listening, talking, gesticulating. A regiment of soldiers, looking as though they had been borrowed for the occasion from the theatre, was drawn up in the centre, where also were a few dilapidated cannon, without balls.

"The Iscuchanos!—the Iscuchanos!" filled the mouths of the crowd, like unclean oaths; and there was much spitting, smoking, and very filthy language. But, for the most part, the people looked like a huge flock of timid domestic animals, driven into a corner by savage dogs.

The palace gates were besieged, and the faces of all who entered them and came out were scanned by feverish and restless eyes.

When his Grace the Archbishop appeared, the people fell on their knees. He

was literally mobbed by his beseeching sheep, and he breathed a stifling atmosphere of male kisses, while he stretched out his little fat hand, moving his fingers in the air, as if to sprinkle salt on their tails. It was the highest ecclesiastical fashion of bestowing a benediction.

Inside the palace, the Polizon was still a private prisoner; the Marchioness was no less so, although her unwilling gaoler, the Viceroy, will labour hard to deliver her. In his conversation with her, the Viceroy was impressed in the same manner and degree as he had been by the communications and arguments of the Polizon. He was convinced of the truth of all she said; but he was unable to act upon it. If, by the sacred stable, and Him who was born in it, he were once more safe in Spain, and all his money bags with him, he would never wade in the puddle of politics again,

or give way to the foolish failing of the money-loving Demas.

In his agony of avarice, the Viceroy sought to make a confidant of the Marchioness. She was a woman of feeling and of sense; he could trust her, and perhaps her woman's wit might suggest some consolation to his troubled heart. His viceregal time was up; he was only waiting there until his successor should arrive. He might cease to be Viceroy to-morrow, if his Majesty's ship, *The Immaculate Conception*, would only come in.

Then, suddenly turning to the Marchioness, he said to her—

“Marchioness, were you ever bribed?”

Answering the question himself, he continued—

“No, of course you never were. But, Marchioness, have you ever known a man who was bribed, and resisted the bribe?”

"I have known many," she replied, with a tone of pain in her voice.

"But were they bribed like this?" the Viceroy asked, removing a cloth, and disclosing several boxes filled with golden ornaments, gold bars, and three large silver pots full of doubloons, or gold ounces.

The Marchioness turned aside her face, and spoke in a low voice—

"Had you," she said, pausing, as if drawing back from some loathsome or deadly creeping thing—"had you shown me the very thirty pieces of silver for which Judas sold our Blessed Lord, I should have felt little less shame and horror than I feel now. All that gold is the price of human blood. May it sink to the bottom of the sea before you reach your home. Not you with it. May you live long enough to perceive the nature

of the crime you have committed, and make some atonement for it."

The Viceroy seemed to shrink visibly in his external proportions. Had it been a man with whom he had to deal, he would have emptied the doubloons out of one of the silver vessels, and made him a present of it. But he was taken aback by the attitude of this majestic woman. He did not, however, quite lose his presence of mind. He called her a Madonna, and said that it became her to be as merciful as she was lovely.

And the Marchioness, without hearing or heeding him, said—

"I came to you for justice, and I find you more culpable than those whom I have already accused."

"Marchioness, there is no justice, nor truth, nor right left in the world, except what is enshrined in your own heart."

And then the Viceroy, covering his face with his hands, as if ashamed of his own nature, added, "They intend to burn you at the stake! Oscuras, the chief Inquisitor, has denounced you in the Council as a traitress; and I have only to hand you over to him now, and he has sworn to do—his duty. When you are once in his clutches, all the bribes the earth could bestow could not get you out of them."

"Is this true?" she asked.

"I swear it on this holy cross," was the reply.

And the Viceroy kissed the gold crucifix which hung on his breast.

The Marchioness would have gone to the stake rather than that her flesh should be touched by so base a miscreant as Oscuras. The mere idea of being held, and bound, and her woman's dress removed by the hands of the double-faced

priest who had betrayed her, roused in her such a turbulence of wrath and indignation that she begged the Viceroy's pardon for what she had said, and asked his forgiveness. "She was but a poor, weak woman, unable to cope with the villainy of men."

Then did the Viceroy tell the Marchioness how Oscuras knew all that the Polizon had revealed before he visited her at the quinta, by which she saw through the Inquisitor's plot. But when he told her how it came to pass that the Friar carried that message to the Polizon's wife, the Marchioness, like all the sex of which she was the ornament, was not only ready to do for the Inquisitor what Judith did for Holofernes, but was almost ready to hug the Viceroy as an intimate and affectionate friend.

All this did not relieve the anxiety of

the Viceroy for himself and his thirty pieces of gold. He had also on his hands the Marchioness, who must be protected; the Polizon, who must be trusted; and this poisoning business, which admitted of no delay, and must be arrested at once.

The viceregal perplexities were cleared away in an unexpected manner. Leche de Lobos, who had obtained the promise of the Chief Inquisitor to suspend all precipitate activity with regard to the Marchioness, sent the officer in waiting to request an immediate interview with his Excellency.

The Viceroy hastened to the council chamber, where he found the Visitador crouching in the attitude of a basket maker, twisting invisible twigs in the corner of a velvet-cushioned bench, and looking as if he were designing some intricate network that was to be wrought, not in delicate rushes, but in bars of iron.

“Excellency,” the Visitador began, in a dry, hard voice, “you rang your bell at a happy moment; but the Council is not yet over, although your councillors have gone. Is the Marchioness de Zandunga very handsome?”

“She is old,” returned the Viceroy.

“But still with some fire?”

“No doubt; but it is the fire of a star.”

“Well,” continued the Visitador, “she has, perhaps, been indiscreet; but I see no use in burning her into a cinder. We must persuade the Inquisitor not to be too zealous; and I think for the present we may leave both her and this Polizon alone. Is the Polizon’s wife one of your stars, or is she a beauty of warmer glow?”

“She is but a child—as fragile, but certainly as beautiful, as a flower,” replied the Viceroy.

“Flowers and stars,” said the Visitador,

"are generally the women who make men fools and traitors. But, Excellency, you will see Oscuras, and add your wish to mine that he proceeds to no extremity with your star and flower."

"I am delighted, my dear Visitador, that you think with me in this matter," said his Excellency. "Conspiracy, I have no doubt, there is. These women, with the Polizon, know of it; so do we; but they are as innocent as we are of any complicity in it."

"Well, will you see Oscuras at once?"

The Viceroy left the council chamber to seek the Chief Inquisitor, and found him not far from the door of the hall, in conversation with two bare-legged, bare-headed men, or what seemed to be men, with very low foreheads, very long arms, and clothed in the filthy folds of some brown stuff, which looked very much like the skins of sleek beasts of prey.

As the Viceroy approached the Inquisitor the two figures bowed very low; and then very slowly, as if following a corpse, they began to pace up and down the marble corridor.

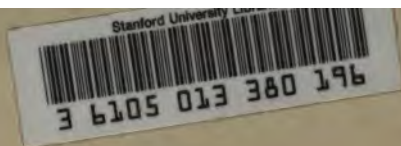
At a private signal from the Inquisitor, they departed like shadows, leaving the two great officials of a magnificent Government earnestly whispering to the other, like two lovers anxious to become one.

As they separated, apparently satisfied with each other, the Viceroy turned the corner of the corridor which led to his private room, and as he did so, he saw three figures hurrying round the farther corner of the same corridor, which was the way into the palace garden, and from the palace garden was a secret path which led to the dungeons of the Holy Inquisition.

On entering his room he found that the Marchioness was not there. He ran out

after the three figures, but found the iron gate fastened on its outer side. He hastened to confront the officer in attendance, but could not find him. In vain he rang his bell, in vain he called. He went to the council chamber: it was empty, and only a deadly silence seemed to occupy it. Finally, he went to the ante-sala, and it was some relief to find there the steadfast Polizon.

END OF VOL. I.



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